THE

Summer-Houſe:

OR, THE

HISTORY

OF

Mr. Morton and Miſs Bamsted.

VOL. II.

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THE

HISTORY

OF

Mr. MORTON *and* Miſs BAMSTED.

BOOK III.

CHAP. I.

MR. Bamſted, though he was ſo much affected by what Mr. Shipton ſaid to him,* as to blame himſelf for having driven his daughter away from his parental protection, by his ſeverity, and though he repented him of his rigorous proceedings, came back

* See Book I. Chap. X.

from his circular journey, in which he received no ſatisfactory anſwers to his enquiries concerning Almeria, with very different ideas, which were not rendered more favourable to her by the ſight of Thomas, nor by the ſubſequent ingenuouſneſs of Mrs. Bamſted in her communications: but as ſoon as his wife had, by thoſe communications, proved the diſingenuity of her former conduct, he was determined to adopt a new behaviour, and to prevent her, by a ſpecious appearance, from penetrating into his deſigns. He accordingly acted in the manner already related, after the peruſal of his daughter's letter, and ſeemed to be very well pleaſed with her ſituation at Mrs. Haynes's, projecting, at the ſame time in his head, which was fruitful in expedients, a ſcheme for her return to Crab-Hall.

The maſk which Mr. Bamſted aſſumed, upon the detection of his wife's connivance

nivance with her daughter againſt him, he kept on till he had delivered the letter ſafe into the hands of the former: he then threw it off with this ſarcaſtical ſpeech—There, madam, there is your daughter again: you may now plot together as much as you pleaſe—but I ſhall take care to ſecure Mr. Shipton for my ſon-in-law, in ſpite of your combined cunning.

At the cloſe of this ſpeech he went directly to Mr. Shipton, told him that he had brought his daughter home with ſentiments very different from thoſe which ſhe carried out with her, and hoped that he would honour him with his alliance without delay.

Mr. Shipton, miſled by the ambiguity in Mr. Bamſted's expreſſions, and really imagining that Miſs Bamſted was returned diveſted of her averſion to him, replied with a chearfulneſs in his countenance, which aroſe from the felicity of

his heart upon the ſuppoſed alteration in her who had made no ſmall diſturbance in it, that he would with great pleaſure proceed to the completion of his wiſhes, as ſoon as the neceſſary preparatives were finiſhed.

This reply made Mr. Bamſted very happy, who then propoſed that a near day ſhould be fixed for his daughter's marriage, telling Mr. Shipton that he relied upon his known integrity too much to doubt the execution of his pecuniary promiſes. With this propoſal Mr. Shipton readily complied, aſſuring him that he would immediately order his lawyer to draw up the ſettlement which he always intended to make on Miſs Bamſted, and he, in return, with great ſolemnity declared that every thing ſhould deſcend to him at his death.

Mr. Shipton was very well ſatisfied with Mr. Bamſted's declarations, becauſe

he knew that, though avarice was his predominant paſſion, he was a man of nice honour, and ſtrict honeſty, and wanted not to be tied down to the performance of his word by the coerſive influence of a note or a bond, thoſe ſevereſt ſatires on the human ſpecies. As he was, therefore, thoroughly ſatisfied with his neighbour's behaviour, he pitched upon the third following day for the conſummation of his nuptials.

Mr. Bamſted, having thus adjuſted matters quite to his mind, left his friend to accelerate his lawyer, and to prepare himſelf for his bridal day, and went home in order to acquaint Almeria with the reſult of his viſit, not a little refreſhed with the fumes of ſelf-flattery on having diſpoſed of his daughter ſo advantageouſly without the advancement of a ſhilling. To be greatly married, in point of fortune was, according to his ſordid notions, to be

happily married: and thoſe notions hindered him from being ſenſible that he had done all in his power to render his daughter the moſt wretched of her ſex.

CHAP. II.

WHILE Mr. Bamſted was fixing the marriage of Almeria, ſhe and her mother were mutually lamenting the hopeleſs ſituation of their affairs, and loading themſelves with accuſations for having irritated, by the duplicity of their conduct, the one a father, the other a huſband, though they had both given him proofs of their repentance: Almeria, by the letter which ſhe wrote ſoon after her arrival at Mrs. Haynes's, and Mrs. Bamſted, by freely diſcloſing its contents: of the two Mrs. Bamſted

Bamſted was, perhaps, the more afflicted, becauſe ſhe conſidered herſelf as the firſt ſpring of thoſe movements which had produced ſuch unhappy conſequences.

In this condition Mr. Bamſted found them on his return. They looked as if they had been in tears, and he, with an aggravating appearance of ſatisfaction in his face, informed them of what had paſſed between him and Mr. Shipton, concluding with a peremptory tone, As the day is fixed, Almeria, I ſhall expect you to be ready, when it arrives, to marry the man whom I have choſen for you.

Almeria, unable to ſupport the ſhock of this information, ſunk down to the floor motionleſs and mute; and no ſigns of life appeared.

Mrs. Bamſted, in an agony of grief cried out, Oh, my dear child is dead,

is dead!—You have killed your daughter with that cruel ſpeech.

Mr. Bamſted, alarmed at the outcries of his wife, and fearing that there was too much truth in what ſhe ſaid, felt all the fond father riſing in his boſom, and called for proper aſſiſtance with the utmoſt rapidity and vociferation.

Scared by the violence of the ſummons, two or three of the domeſtics who were neareſt to the apartment from which it iſſued with ſo much impetuoſity, entered with the ſtrongeſt marks of terror imprinted on their features, concluding that either their miſtreſs or Miſs Bamſted was in her laſt moments.

Almeria was ſoon removed to her chamber, but ſhe did not ſoon recover from her ſwoon, and when ſhe did, ſhe gave no marks of reaſon, but fell into ſeveral fits, which ſucceeded each other ſo faſt, that the phyſician who attended her deemed her caſe to be extremely dangerous. Mr.

Mr. Bamſted was ſtunned with the doctor's declaration, of whoſe medical ſagacity he had a very high opinion, as he had practiſed in the country with great ſucceſs; could not bear the thoughts of loſing his daughter, though he had been ſo active in contributing to make her life miſerable: — If ſhe dies, ſaid he, I ſhall be diſtracted: and he behaved, indeed, in a manner to give probability to the exclamation which the melancholy object before his eyes wrung from him.

The doctor, obſerving the frantic behaviour of Mr. Bamſted, and not being acquainted with the real character of the man, was a great while unwilling to ſay what he thought about his daughter, leſt it ſhould produce fatal conſequences, but being repeatedly deſired not to flatter him with falſe hopes, he freely declared that if there was not a

favourable turn in four and twenty hours, he ſhould give her over.

This ſpeech was like the blow of a thunder-bolt to him. For ſome moments he ſtood as if his faculties were torpid: the doctor then, repenting of what he had ſpoken, told him that there were a few ſymptoms in Miſs Bamſted's favour, and that he had no reaſon yet to deſpair of her recovery. The recollection, however, of the doctor's former words, entirely deſtroyed the efficacy of the latter ones; for inſtead of receiving any comfort from them he was ſunk into deſpondency.

Mrs. Bamſted was very deeply affected by Almeria's ſituation, but hoping that the apparent contrition of her father would encourage her to expect a thorough change in his ſentiments with regard to the alliance with Mr. Shipton, ſhe was not ſo violently alarmed, but waited with patience for the reſtoration

tion of her health, which would be, ſhe juſtly thought, forwarded by the removal of the terrors which had ſo rudely ſhaken the pillars of exiſtence.

CHAP. III.

I MUST now beg leave to inform my readers of Mr. Dormer's motions when he left Roſe-Place: he quitted that hoſpitable manſion, which had to him been ſo happy an Aſylum, full of high notions concerning love and honour, but not without reproaches of conſcience when reflections upon gratitude and friendſhip came acroſs his mind. He could not help frequently correcting himſelf, as he rode along, for having, with the ſecrecy and precipitation of a man who was aſhamed of his conduct, and who dreaded a ſcrutiny

into it, retreated from his liberal benefactor, with ſo ſtrong a proof of his liberality in his pocket. The ſtings of compunction gave many interruptions to the raptures of imagination, but thoſe ſtings grew leſs and leſs painful as he approximated to the grounds belonging to Mr. Bamſted, and when he beheld the walls which contained all that his ſoul doated on in this world, no pains but thoſe of love diſturbed his breaſt. After he had for ſome time gazed ardently on thoſe walls, as if he could have devoured them with his eyes, and wiſhed himſelf endued with the power of inviſibility that he might explore, unſeen, the interior part of Mr. Bamſted's habitation, he reconnoitred the humble dwellings in the neighbourhood in order to procure a temporary lodging, and in hopes alſo of procuring intelligence concerning the Bamſted-family.

While

While he was engaged in the reconnoitring way, a very neat little cottage drew his attention ſo forcibly, that he felt an inſtantaneous deſire to become an inhabitant of it: a comely, tidy woman ſtood at the door, which had a porch before it, and by the whole of her rural appearance, without the leaſt ruſticity about her, that deſire was increaſed.

Upon his aſking her if he could have an apartment for a few days, he received an affirmative anſwer, but was alſo told, with an amiable ſimplicity, that the untenanted room was not fit for a gentleman of his figure.

Dormer was not an Adonis, but he was a very agreeable young fellow: he dreſſed genteely, without following cloſely every fantaſtic variation of the faſhion, and had the air of a man in the firſt form of high-breeding. It was this natural air which ſtruck Mrs. Woodly, for

for his dreſs was plain throughout. Any room, my good dame, ſaid he, will do for my purpoſe: your cottage is ſo pretty that I long to be lodged in it.

Thus having ſaid, he diſmounted, without waiting for a reply, and putting his horſe's bridle into the hands of a boy who accoſted him with a ruſtic bow, and ſeemed to belong to the adjoining farm, he bade Mrs. Woodly conduct him to the vacant room.

Dormer followed his venerable conductreſs, who looked like an honeſt Baucis, and was ſo much pleaſed with with his new lodgment that he took poſſeſſion of it immediately, and ordered her to ſet before him what refreſhment her houſe afforded, having faſted longer than uſual.

Mrs. Woodly, charmed with the appearance and behaviour of her new lodger, went directly to Mrs. Morton, and, in the fullneſs of her heart, launch-

ed

ed out in his praiſe. Well, to be ſure, ſaid ſhe, he is a clever gentleman, that's what he is; but I don't know what in the earth to do for ſomething fit for him to eat; for to be ſure he has not been uſed to my coarſe fare.

I ſaw him diſmount, ſaid Mrs. Morton; he ſeemed to be a pretty gentleman, and I give you joy upon the occaſion: as to proviſion for him, pray don't make yourſelf uneaſy about that, for the preſent which I received juſt before his arrival from Mr. Bamſted is quite at his ſervice.

Mrs. Woodly, having returned a thouſand thanks to Mrs. Morton for her moſt friendly and ſeaſonable offer, made haſte to avail herſelf of it, and in a ſhort time accommodated Mr. Dormer with ſuch refreſhment as he had been accuſtomed to at Roſe-Place, but which he did not expect to find at the little tenement in which he had taken up his quarters.

quarters. His good landlady, in order to recommend the diſh to his palate, told him that it came from Squire Bamſted's, and, by giving him that information, made him far more eager to enquire after the family at Crab-Hall, than to ſilence the calls of appetite. Ah! ſir, continued ſhe, they are in a wo-condition at the Hall, for poor Miſs is counted to be at death's door.

How! cried Dormer, ſtarting at the intelligence which almoſt froze his young blood, Miſs Bamſted at the point of death?

As fine a young lady, ſir, as ever came into the world, Heaven bleſs her, but to be ſure ſhe has met with ill uſage. The ſquire has not behaved like a kind father: it is he who has done all this miſchief, but I believe that he wiſhes now he had not been ſo hard-hearted, for he is out of his wits, and ready to hang himſelf for what he has done.

Dormer,

Dormer, though he could not poſſibly want a clue for the meaning of Mrs. Woodly's communications, being very deſirous to hear more particulars relating to the dear idol of his ſoul, ſaid, with an air of the greateſt aſtoniſhment, What! has Mr. Bamſted himſelf been the cauſe of his daughter's dangerous ſituation? How could the father of ſuch a child think of reducing her to ſo deplorable a condition?

Mrs. Woodly ſhook her head, and replied, Ah! ſir, you don't know the ſquire, he is a ſtrange man: but if miſs ſhould by the bleſſing of God recover, I hope, as he takes on ſo much, that he will be ſorry for what is paſt, and not make her marry Squire Shipton.

Marry Mr. Shipton? cried Dormer, with an impetuous tone, firing at the hateful name.

Do you know him, ſir? ſaid Mrs. Woodly.

I have

I have heard enough of him, replied he angerly, I wiſh he was—in the moſt diſtant part of the globe.

He is a good ſort of a gentleman to be ſure, ſaid Mrs. Woodly, but a great deal too old for miſs, and as ſhe plainly ſhewed that ſhe could not abide him, by going away to Madam Haynes to avoid the match, it was a barbarous thing in her father, when he brought her home, to perſiſt in forcing her to take him for her huſband; eſpecially as he knew that he might make her the happieſt woman in nature.

As Mrs. Woodly's converſation now began to grow very intereſting, Mr. Dormer urged her to proceed with redoubled earneſtneſs and liſtened to her with redoubled attention.

In what manner, Mrs. Woodly? ſaid he, eagerly—you increaſe my curioſity.

By marrying her to Mr. Dormer, who lives yonder there at Sir Harry Bloſſom's;

ſom's; a young gentleman who ſhe got acquainted with while ſhe was at Madam Haynes's. He, now, would be ſomething like a huſband for her: I have heard ſo much about him that I ſhould be vaſtly proud to ſee him, and I will be bold to ſay, that if miſs had any hopes of being his wife, ſhe would ſoon get the better of all her ailments.

Dormer, at the concluſion of the above ſpeech, felt a ſtrong inclination to diſcover himſelf to a perſon who ſeemed to be ſo well acquainted with his character, though he wondered by what means ſhe became ſo knowing about him, and ſo much prepoſſeſſed in his favour; but vanity, a powerful paſſion from which no human being is, perhaps, totally exempt, prompted him to remain in his incognito-ſtate, and impelled him alſo to aſk more minute queſtions concerning the gentleman on whoſe account Miſs Bamſted had been ſo cruelly

treated.

treated. The anſwers which he received were very flattering to him as a man, and as a lover, and he began to extract no ſmall conſolation from the impreſſion which his Almeria's dangerous illneſs had made upon her father, hoping, from the ſigns of repentance which appeared in his behaviour, that the reſtoration of her health would occaſion a happy revolution in his ſentiments, and convince him of the abſurdity, not to ſay unkindneſs, of his former conduct.

CHAP. IV.

SATISFIED that it was quite unneceſſary to delay the diſcovery of himſelf any longer to Mrs. Woodly, who would not, he juſtly imagined, be leſs ready to do him any friendly offices in

in her power, after he had made it, Dormer freely told her that he was the lover of Miſs Bamſted, and the very perſon concerning whom ſhe had ſaid ſo many handſome things.

Lifting up her eyes, and clapping her hands together, My ſtars! ſaid ſhe, you don't ſay ſo? What are you Mr. Dormer, who Miſs Bamſted is ſo mortally in love with?

I am indeed the perſon who has the moſt ſincere regard for Miſs Bamſted, and whoſe heart bleeds at this moment for the miſery which ſhe endures for his ſake.

Ay, ſweet creature, ſaid Mrs. Woodly, ſhe ſuffers a deal for your ſake, true enough, but — Well, I proteſt, I can't take my eyes off of you—God bleſs your good face! Who ſhould think that you was Mr. Dormer, my dear young lady's lover?—How odd things come about! Ah, ſir, I wiſh I could tell you better

news

news about her — But, perhaps, with the aſſiſtance of a very worthy gentlewoman who lodges with me, and who is much reſpected by the family at the Hall, even by the ſquire himſelf, and that is ſaying much, we may contrive to let her know that you are ſo near her, and by ſo doing, help to put her upon her legs again: ſuch news will be of more ſervice to her than all the apothecary's ſlops.

Dormer was more pleaſed with Mrs. Woodly's zeal in his behalf, than diſpoſed to believe that her good-natured intentions could be executed with ſucceſs. He wiſhed, indeed, that Mrs. Bamſted was acquainted with his retreat, becauſe he was aſſured of her friendſhip, but he was fearful alſo, that if her huſband found it out, his partiality for Mr. Shipton would return with double fury, and haſten Almeria out of a world in which ſhe was not encouraged to expect

any

any felicity. In anſwer, therefore, to Mrs. Woodly's laſt ſpeech, he told her that he thought himſelf very lucky in having ſtopped at her houſe, thanked her for her friendly offers, and aſſured her that ſhe ſhould not go unrewarded for her ſervices: but could not help adding with a ſigh, I am afraid that you will not be able to—

Never be faint-hearted ſir, ſaid the honeſt villager, interrupting him; and, as for rewarding my ſervices, I would have you to know that I ſhall be rewarded enough if I can, by lending a helping hand, make you and Miſs Bamſted come together; for I do verily believe that you would both be as happy as the days are long. And to ſhew you that I am not one of your flummery folks, I will go directly to the gentlewoman and open my budget to her.

She waited not for a reply, but quitted the room juſt as ſhe had uttered the laſt

laſt word, leaving Mr. Dormer charmed with the benevolence of her diſpoſition, and the amiable ſimplicity of her manners, by which ſhe had appeared in his eyes infinitely ſuperior to thoſe faſhionable females who have been, by a refined education, almoſt poliſhed out of their humanity.

While he ſat ruminating near a window, from which a rich and extenſive landſcape preſented itſelf to his ſight, the variegated beauties of the proſpect, conſiderably heightened by a brilliant ſetting ſun, and the fragrance of the air around him ariſing from a neighbouring hay-field, tempted him to ſtrole about the Environs till the ſplendid ſcenery was obſcured by the departure of the glorious orb to which it was indebted for all its luſtre.

CHAP.

CHAP. V.

MRS. Woodly, faithful to her promiſe, and overflowing with benevolence, went immediately to Mrs. Morton, whom ſhe found very intent upon a book in her own apartment. Oh! madam, ſaid ſhe, as ſoon as ſhe had entered the room, with a countenance uncommonly chearful, who do you think the gentleman is who is come to lodge with me?

Mrs. Morton, taking her eyes from her book, looked an anſwer.

Nay, continued Mrs. Woodly, you may well be puzzled, for I am ſure I never was ſo ſurprized in my life. Why madam, 'tis Mr. Dormer.

Mr. Dormer? replied Mrs. Morton, laying down her book, with an aſtoniſhed aſpect.

As ſure as you ſit in that chair, madam, ſaid Mrs. Woodly: he is a charming gentleman; I don't wonder that Miſs Bamſted fell in love with him—But, however, that's neither here nor there: I come about buſineſs now—Don't you think, madam, that miſs would be glad to find he is at my houſe?—Poor thing! I believe ſhe would be comforted by ſuch news, for it would make her certain that he is as much in love with her as ſhe is with him, for, to be ſure, he came into this neighbourhood on purpoſe to be near her.—She then repeated what had paſſed between Mr. Dormer and herſelf, and concluded with ſaying, I hope you will hit upon ſome way to let Madam Bamſted know theſe here things, if you are afraid that miſs ought not to be told them yet.

Mrs. Morton was very well inclined to imagine that Miſs Bamſted would receive

receive conſolation from the anxiety which Mr. Dormer had diſcovered at her abſence, by taking an apartment in the neighbourhood; but ſhe was alſo apprehenſive that ſuch pleaſing intelligence, unleſs ſhe had reaſon to hope for her father's approval of their regard for each other, would only occaſion diſquieting emotions in her tender boſom, and rather retard than accelerate her recovery. Mrs. Woodly's hint, however, about Mrs. Bamſted, being in her opinion of too much conſequence to be ſlighted, ſhe told her that ſhe would endeavour to have a private interview with her worthy friend before the evening was over.

Pray God bleſs you, madam, ſaid Mrs. Woodly, for your goodneſs, and proſper your undertakings on Miſs Bamſted's account—I will go and make the gentleman happy by telling him what a friend he has got ſo near him.

Mrs. Morton then tied on her hat and wrapped herſelf up in her cloak, for ſhe was of a tender conſtitution, and there was a chilline∫s in the air, and proceeded to Crab-Hall, leaving her valuable landlady to acquaint Mr. Dormer with the meaſures which ſhe was purſuing for the promotion of his happine∫s.

Highly pleaſed with her viſit to Mrs. Morton, Mrs. Woodly went to Mr. Dormer's room, in order to give him pleaſure by communicating the reſult of it: In proportion to the delight which ſhe felt, while ſhe was walking to his room, was her diſappointment, when ſhe found him not there; but ſhe ſoon made herſelf very comfortable, after ſhe had expreſſed that diſappointment in a few characteriſtic exclamations, by ſaying, Well, well, I ſhall ſee him in a little time, I ſuppoſe, for it grows latiſh.

CHAP.

CHAP. VI.

MRS. Morton, on her arrival at Crab-Hall, was happy enough to hear that Mr. Bamſted had left the houſe about half an hour before ſhe made her appearance at it: with Mrs. Bamſted, ſhe therefore enjoyed what ſhe had wiſhed for, a private interview, and related circumſtantially what Mrs. Woodly had imparted to her, but without her circumlocution, after having enquired in a particular manner into Miſs Bamſted's ſituation.

Your intelligence, madam, ſaid Mrs. Bamſted, gives me both pleaſure and pain: pleaſure, becauſe Mr. Dormer's behaviour diſcovers a ſtrong attachment to Almeria, and pain, becauſe I am afraid that my poor girl, who frequently

aſks me if I ever hear about him, cannot with ſafety be informed of the deep impreſſion which ſhe has made upon him, as her father, though he has ſhewn the moſt ſtriking marks of concern for her dangerous condition, has not once thought of removing the diſorder upon her ſpirits, by recalling the cruel words which firſt brought it on—In which condition, nothing I doubt will be of any ſervice to her, but Mr. Bamſted's aſſuring her that ſhe ſhall not be forced into a marriage with Shipton. Doctor Arnold, who went away a few minutes before your arrival, is of the ſame opinion.

Mrs. Bamſted then lamented, in very pathetic terms, the diſingenuous part which ſhe had herſelf acted, in concerting the eſcape of Almeria to avoid the marriage which her father had projected for her, from a ſuppoſal that the meaſures ſhe had taken to prevent the

ſacrifice of her daughter to the man of her abhorrence would render her matrimonial miſery inevitable.

Mrs. Morton, with the moſt lenient expreſſions, endeavoured to heal her friend's unquiet mind, and to adminiſter conſolation to her by convincing her that ſhe had cenſured her own conduct with too much ſeverity: If I had been in your circumſtances, madam, ſaid ſhe, I ſhould have acted in the ſame manner, and ſhould not have reproached myſelf for having exerted all my addreſſes to counterwork the deſigns of a tyrannical father. But come, madam, continued ſhe, let us rather reflect upon the time preſent than encourage the revival of paſt ſcenes. You are of opinion, and not without ſome reaſon, that Miſs Bamſted cannot with ſafety be informed of Mr. Dormer's nearneſs to her, and of his ſtrong attachment to her, ſtrongly implied in that nearneſs: I am

far from deſiring you to hazard ſuch information abruptly: but I am induced to believe that if ſhe was previouſly prepared for it, and if it was conveyed to her gradually, with a delicacy of addreſs, it might eaſe the load of tender grief which lies heavy on her heart. What you urge, with regard to Mr. Bamſted's not having given her directly room to hope for the non-performance of the promiſes which he has made to Mr. Shipton, is plauſible but not concluſive enough, I think, to render the propoſed information improper: for while he diſcovers ſo much concern about her diſtreſsful condition, ſhe may rationally form, and perhaps does form pleaſing expectations, though you conſider her caſe as deſperate. Let us, therefore, madam, contrive to make Miſs Bamſted acquainted with this intelligence without affecting her too much in the communication of it.

While

While they were conſulting each other how to proceed, a ſervant came from Miſs Bamſted, intreating her mother's company, who, on being told that ſhe had juſt awaked much refreſhed from a long ſlumber, went with the greateſt ſatisfaction to her chamber, becauſe ſhe flattered herſelf that ſhe ſhould have a good opportunity, with Mrs. Morton's friendly aſſiſtance, to let her know how powerfully ſhe had engaged the affections of Mr. Dormer, by diſcloſing to her the news which ſhe had received from Mrs. Woodly.'s

CHAP. VII.

DORMER, when he had ſtrolled about half a mile from his new habitation, was drove by a haſty and violent ſhower to the portico before an

elegant building at a little diſtance from him for ſhelter. He had not been there five minutes when one of the domeſtics opened the door and brought an invitation from his maſter to ſtep in till the ſhower was over.

Pleaſed with the civility of the meſſage, Dormer followed the domeſtic into a parlour, in which he found two gentlemen ſitting over a bowl of punch. One of them, who by his manner evidently appeared to be the maſter of the houſe, advanced towards him, and politely deſired him to take a glaſs that he might not take cold in his wet cloaths: the other roſe from his ſeat on his entrance, but returned his bow with a ſtately movement of his body, and then re-ſeated himſelf with a very gracious air.

Dormer, when he had filled his glaſs, and aſked the gentleman who had recommended the liquor which it contained

tained to him, to whom he was indebted for ſo obliging an invitation, was ſo aſtoniſhed, when that gentleman replied, My name, ſir, is Shipton, and ſo much more ſo, when he added, and this is my worthy neighbour Mr. Bamſted, that he could hardly articulate their healths, and carry the glaſs to his lips with a ſteady hand: but, thunder-ſtruck as he was, he determined immediately to keep himſelf concealed, in hopes of acquiring uſeful hints for the regulation of his future conduct. With this political view, he ſtudied to adapt his converſation to his company, and happily became ſo very agreeable, both to the father of his miſtreſs and to his rival, that they ſeemed to be highly pleaſed with him.

Dormer, as it grew late began to be apprehenſive that his honeſt landlady would be alarmed about him, and wiſhed at the ſame time to out-ſtay Mr.

Bamſted, ſo that he did not, to borrow a phraſe from the card-table, ſit upon velvet. But his curioſity got the better of his apprehenſions, upon the departure of Mr. Bamſted ſoon after he wiſhed for his abſence, and he reſolved to ſift Mr. Shipton thoroughly concerning his Almeria. That gentleman, ſaid he, is, I have heard, very happy in a daughter; Miſs Bamſted is, according to report, a beautiful young lady, and as accompliſhed in her manners as agreeable in her perſon.

Report then, ſaid Mr. Shipton, tho' a common liar, has ſpoken truth about Miſs Bamſted, for ſhe is really a fine girl, and deſerves an excellent huſband. Come, ſir, you have no objection, I hope, to the dedication of a bumper to her health.

Not the leaſt, ſir.—

Why, ſir, continued Mr. Shipton, you muſt know that I have been long

an admirer of that lady, and ſhould have been married to her by this time, with her father's entire approbation, had ſhe not, from a ſtrange prepoſſeſſion againſt me, conveyed herſelf to the houſe of a friend at the diſtance of ſeveral miles, in order to avoid an alliance which ſhe abhorred; though at the hazard of diſinheritance. Her father had addreſs enough to decoy her from that friend's houſe yeſterday, when ſhe was not prepared for a viſit from him, and upon her re-arrival came to me, and by the manner of his behaviour made me believe that ſhe was returned with ſentiments in my favour: in conſequence of which belief, I, at his earneſt requeſt to fix an early day for our nuptials, pitched upon to-morrow for the celebration of them. I ſoon found, however, that I had been miſled by the ambiguity of his expreſſions, and that his daughter was returned with no abate-

ment

ment of her averſion to me, for, upon his acquainting her with what had paſſed between us, ſhe fell into fits, and has been ever ſince in a dangerous ſituation: and as I found alſo that Miſs Bamſted's averſion to me was ſtrengthened by her partiality for a gentleman, a Mr. Dormer, with whom ſhe became acquainted during her elopement, I have given up all the hopes which I had entertained of being happy with her. Nay, I have, ſtruck with the account of her ſituation, which I received from her father's lips not long before you came in, prevailed on him to compaſſionate her ſufferings and to conſent to unite her to the man of her inclination, if upon enquiry into his character and fortune he ſhould not be unworthy of being allied to his family. He is gone home reſolved to aſſure her that he will not compell her to take me for her huſband, and to inform her

at

at the ſame time that he will not oppoſe her inclination for Mr. Dormer if his enquiries about him turn out ſatisfactory. I have not the pleaſure of being acquainted with Mr. Dormer, but I have been told that he is an agreeable, accompliſhed, and deſerving gentleman: if he comes up to the character which I have heard of him, he will indeed be worthy of Miſs Bamſted, and I ſhall very readily uſe my beſt endeavours to promote their mutual happineſs, contenting myſelf with being looked upon as a friend by her who cannot bear the thoughts of any conjugal connections with me. You ſmile, ſir, as if you thought that I have not acted like a paſſionate lover upon this occaſion, but I do poſitively declare that I have too great a regard for Miſs Bamſted to marry her againſt her will.

I ſmile not at your behaviour, ſir, upon this occaſion, replied Dormer, which

which has been altogether noble, generous, and heroic; I only ſmile to think how much you will be ſurprized to find that your rival is before you.

Are you then the Mr. Dormer for whom Miſs Bamſted is in ſo dangerous a condition?—Give me your hand, ſir, and depend upon my friendſhip towards the completion of your felicity. I have ſpoken warmly in your behalf already without perſonally knowing you; I ſhall hardly be leſs inclined to make myſelf ſerviceable to you, after the converſation which has paſſed between us.

Dormer, tranſported with the frankneſs, as well as friendlineſs of Mr. Shipton's carriage to him, gave him a faithful account of the progreſs of love in his boſom, during Miſs Bamſted's ſhort ſtay at Mrs. Haynes's, the ſhock which he received at her ſudden departure, and the uncertainty he was in concerning her ſentiments in his favour, till he

was

was acquainted with her melancholy ſituation by Mrs. Woodly. The ſummer-houſe ſurvey was not forgotten, nor were thoſe occurrences at Roſe-Place omitted, which might ſerve either to prove his ardor as a lover, or to ſtrengthen the good opinion which Mr. Shipton had entertained of him as a man. He dwelt with particular ſatisfaction on the happineſs which he enjoyed in the friendſhip of the Bloſſom-family, not in an oſtentatious manner, but yet not without ſome propenſity to increaſe his conſequence: and concluded with ſaying, I will not treſpaſs longer on your patience, ſir: it is late, and you will not be ſorry to retire to reſt: I am extremely obliged to you for all your civilities and friendly aſſurances, and, whether my wiſhes are crowned with ſucceſs or not, ſhall with the ſincereſt gratitude remember them.

Mr.

Mr. Shipton having thanked Mr. Dormer for the confidence which he had repoſed in him, and re-aſſured him that he ſhould intereſt himſelf in his affairs with more warmth than ever, they wiſhed each other with equal cordiality a good evening.

CHAP. VIII.

DORMER had not walked a quarter of a mile before his attention was arreſted by the ſight of Mr. Bamſted lying motionleſs at the foot of a tree. He had all the appearance of a dead man at a diſtance, and the ſigns of life were very faint npon a cloſe examination of his features. Unattended as he was, Dormer knew not immediately how to act upon the occaſion, which would not, he was ſenſible, admit of any

any delay. To remove him without aſſiſtance was not in his power, and to ſee him languiſhing in a ſtate between life and death was a ſevere ſhock to his humanity. Awhile he ſtood ſuſpended in thought, unable to determine whether his returning to Mr. Shipton's, or his proceeding to Crab-Hall, would be the moſt eligible ſtep. Recollecting, however, at laſt, that the latter place was rather nearer to the ſpot on which he deliberated, than the former, he made all poſſible haſte to Mr. Bamſted's habitation, and informed the ſervant who appeared of his maſter's misfortune, deſiring him at the ſame time, either to follow him directly or to diſpatch one of his fellow-ſervants with the utmoſt expedition, after he had deſcribed the place where he lay with ſo much minuteneſs that it could not be miſſed.

Mrs. Bamſted, who had expected her huſband's return, at leaſt an hour before,

fore, and who began to fear that he had met with an accident, opened the parlour-door in a great hurry at the noiſe which Dormer made at the gate, not thinking, in the flutter of his ſpirits, that his Almeria might perhaps be alarmed by it. Having heard the concluſion of the intelligence communicated to the ſervant, ſhe advanced full of terror in order to make a ſtrict enquiry into it, but the intelligencer was gone. She then diſpatched two men after him and bade them fly to their maſter's relief.—They were very ready to obey her commands, ſoon overtook Mr. Dormer, and ſoon afterwards, with him, found their maſter not in a condition to riſe from the ground. As the moon ſhone without any interruption to its ſplendor, they could plainly perceive by his countenance that he was hardly in the poſſeſſion of his intellects, for he ſtared at them with fixed eyes,

but

but made not the ſlighteſt anſwer to their repeated queſtions concerning his health and his feelings.

Dormer, having aſſiſted the ſervants to ſupport Mr. Bamſted with their ſhoulders, walked before them towards the Hall, deeply ruminating on the adventures of the night.

When he returned he found Mrs. Bamſted at the houſe-door, to which anxiety had rooted her from the time of his departure.

Don't be too much terrified, madam, ſaid he to her, Mr. Bamſted will, I hope, ſoon recover from his indiſpoſition: he is much better than he was when I delivered my diſagreeable information.

It was very providental, ſir, replied ſhe, that he was diſcovered by a gentleman ſo humane, and ſo conſiderate. She could ſay no more, for the ſervants had now entered the houſe; Dormer had

had preceded them, in order to leſſen the ſuppoſed agitation of Mrs. Bamſted's mind on the appearance of her huſband, in circumſtances ſo humiliating to human nature, and as ſoon as he had committed him to her care, and to that of her attendants, he took his leave, wiſhing to hear a favourable account of him in the morning.

CHAP. IX.

WHEN Dormer arrived at the cottage from whence he had ſtrolled, little imagining that he ſhould have been ſo long abſent from it, his worthy landlady looked out of an upper window upon his knocking at the outward door, and ſeeing who was there, cried out, God bleſs you, ſir, I will

will be with you in a minute: I have been in a peck of troubles about you. After the delivery of thoſe few words, in a hearty tone, ſhe cloſed the caſement, and was not much longer than a minute in getting to the gate. She received him with a ſecond bleſſing, and told him that ſhe had been frightened out of her wits for fear he had met with ſome terrible affair.

Dormer, admiring the honeſt ſimplicity of the woman, and making all due allowances for her phraſeology, returned her many thanks for expreſſing ſo much concern for his welfare; but made her ſtare by telling her that her houſe had been lucky to him. You ſeem to be ſurprized, Mrs. Woodly, continued he, but I will ſoon convince you that I have ſaid nothing but the truth.

He then walked into the houſe, and Mrs. Woodly replied, while ſhe followed his footſteps, Ah! good ſir, I dare

to

to ſay I ſhall never hear a lye come out of your mouth.

Dormer, before he aſcended to his own apartment, performed his promiſe by relating to Mrs. Woodly what had happened to him during his excurſion from her cottage, making no concealments from her, becauſe he conſidered her, and very juſtly, as a friend who might be as ſerviceable to him, as ſhe appeared willing to be ſo. She lifted up her hands and eyes at the concluſion of his narrative, and ſaid, Well, to be ſure as I am a chriſtian, my houſe has been lucky to you though you have not had one dream in it, and I hope that it never will be otherwiſe. Lack-a-day! how odd things come about! Who would have thought of your bringing home ſuch news! I am vaſtly glad to hear it, and Madam Morton will be as glad as I.

Morton,

Morton? ſaid Dormer, repeating the word with a ſteady voice. Ay, ſir, ſo the lady who lodges above ſtairs calls herſelf: ſhe is as worthy a woman I do verily believe as ever broke a bit of bread, and I am ſure ſhe has taken a deal of pains on your account.

Mrs. Woodly then narrated what Mrs. Morton had told her, when ſhe returned from her viſit to Mrs. Bamſted, which gave him a great deal of pleaſure, becauſe he found that Almeria had been acquainted with his motions, and that ſhe had received no ſmall ſatisfaction from the intelligence concerning him: it gave him the more ſatisfaction, becauſe he had reaſon to flatter himſelf that her father, whom ſhe recovered from his benumbing diſorder, would greatly contribute to the reſtoration of her health, and the happineſs of her mind, by acting agreeably to his declared reſolution to Mr. Shipton,

ton. Before he retired to his apartment, however, he could not refrain from making enquiries about Mrs. Morton, and Mrs. Woodly told him all that ſhe knew relating to her, but ſhe could only tell him that ſhe came to her houſe in the utmoſt diſtreſs, that ſhe was relieved by Mrs. Bamſted with the utmoſt generoſity, and that ſhe appeared, both by her manners and converſation, to have ſeen better days.

Mrs. Woodly having obſerved a particular attention in Dormer's countenance while ſhe gave him the above information, and heard a deep ſigh when ſhe concluded it, could not help ſaying, Mayhap, ſir, you may not be a ſtranger to the lady, for I proteſt I think there is a likeneſs between you.

I once, indeed, knew a lady of that name, replied Dormer, and ſhe was the beſt friend I had in the world, but I am afraid to hope that your worthy lodger

lodger is the perſon whom I ſo much wiſh to behold. He then, not chuſing to keep Mrs. Woodly any longer from her evening's reſt, after having made her ſit up ſo late for him, and being deſirous alſo of indulging himſelf with the private enjoyment of his own reflections, left her to recruit her ſpirits for the buſineſs of the morning.

CHAP. X.

DORMER, after a reſtleſs night, waked with an ardent deſire to ſee the lady between whom and himſelf Mrs. Woodly had diſcovered ſome ſimilitude of features. He did not remain a great while without the gratification of that deſire, for Mrs. Woodly, when ſhe came to aſk him what he

would have for breakfaſt, informed him that Mrs. Morton, from what ſhe had mentioned to her, was very deſirous to ſee him, though ſhe was not acquainted with any gentleman of his name.

Mrs. Morton's curioſity as a woman was much excited by the deſcription of Dormer's perſon, which ſhe had but ſlightly ſeen, and ſtill more ſo as a mother who pleaſed herſelf with thinking, from that deſcription, that her long-loſt ſon might be, by the goodneſs of Providence, reſtored to her fond arms. She was almoſt afraid, indeed, to encourage ſuch gladdening ideas, but ſomething impelled her with an irreſiſtible force to enjoy, by anticipation, the tranſports which they inſpired.

Dormer, after having ordered his breakfaſt, ſent Mrs. Woodly to Mrs. Morton to let her know that he would do himſelf the pleaſure of waiting on her when ſhe was moſt at leiſure to

be

be viſited, and in a few minutes received an invitation to take his tea with her. Full of ſenſations which he had never felt before; alternately elevated by thoſe, and dreading diſappointment, he repaired immediately to the room in which Mrs. Morton, with feelings equally tumultuous, waited his approach.

When he entered the room he was damped, for he diſcovered not the fainteſt trait of his mother, whom he wiſhed to recognize, in the face of Mrs. Morton: but ſhe felt in a different manner, for ſhe, in his features, ſaw her ſon painted in colours too ſtrong, too lively to be miſtaken: ſhe was ſhocked, however, at his not recollecting her, not imagining that ſeven years could have made ſo great an alteration in her perſon: but ſhe had ſuffered ſo much in body, mind, and fortune, during thoſe years, that there was really

nothing extraordinary in his not knowing her.

Thus diſappointed, he only advanced to her, and, with an addreſs politely reſpectful, told her how much he was obliged to her for the honour ſhe had done him by her genteel invitation.

His voice, his mien, his every motion ſerved to increaſe the pleaſing pains which his looks had raiſed in his mother's agitated boſom. Unable, through exceſs of joy, to articulate a ſyllable, ſhe, inſtead of making any reply to the ſpeech which he had directed to her, ſtood collected, (for ſhe had riſen from the chair at his entrance as a ſtranger) for ſome time ſurveying him from head to foot with an eager aſpect; at laſt, ſhe burſt into a flood of tears, and ſinking into her ſeat cried, Gracious Heaven! 'tis he, 'tis he.

Dormer ſtarted at ſo unexpected an exclamation, and, when he had offered

up

up his moſt devout acknowledgments to the ſupreme diſpoſer of all events for ſo happy a diſcovery, threw himſelf upon his knees before his mother, preſſed one of her hands to his lips, and, as ſoon as the ſudden ſwell of rapture in his filial breaſt would give him leave to ſpeak to her, ſaid, Oh! madam, what amazing felicity is this! Are you then the dear, the truly-amiable parent, concerning whom I have, in ſo many different places, made fruitleſs enquiries? Yes, yes, you are, and I cannot, in adequate expreſſions, pour out the gratitude of my ſoul to Providence for bleſſing me with this ecſtatic interview. Where have you been, madam, for ſo many years? and what have you ſuffered? for, according to Mrs. Woodly's imperfect account, you arrived here in diſtreſsful circumſtances.

Much have I ſuffered, indeed, my dear ſon, replied Mrs. Morton wiping

her ſtreaming eyes, ſince I was deprived of you, in various ſhapes, and though I have met with the moſt valuable friend in Mrs. Bamſted, frequent have been my ſighs, numberleſs have been my tears, for want of your comforting preſence—But now my ſorrows are at an end, and I feel my breaſt glow with gratitude to Heaven for having heard my humble but fervent prayers. Here all the tender mother again took poſſeſſion of her eyes, and ſhe wept over his neck, able only to breathe inarticulate murmurs of maternal affection. Touched with her ſoftening behaviour, he alſo found his utterance choaked. Rooted to the floor, he remained in his kneeling attitude, till ſhe, who had ſo moved, ſo melted him, recovering the powers of ſpeech, ſaid, Riſe, my dear, dear ſon, and tell me through what variety of ſcenes you have paſſed, and what changes of fortune you have

met

met with ſince the fatal night in which you was ſnatched, by the hands of lawleſs ruffians, from the protection of your parents: why you adopted a new name, and whence aroſe your happy ſituation in Sir Harry Bloſſom's family.

Morton, for ſo we ſhall call him during the remainder of this hiſtory, roſe at his mother's command, and, as ſoon as the tumult into which his ſpirits had been thrown by the intereſting diſcovery of the morning had ſubſided, anſwered all her importunately-uttered queries, by entering into a detail of the principal occurrences of his life while he lived in a ſtate of ſeparation from her, in the following manner.

Soon after I had cloſed my eyes on that ever-to-be-remembered evening, the door of my chamber was burſt open with a violent noiſe, and I was fiercely ordered by two fellows who looked like the miniſters of deſtruction, with the

moſt bitter threats of inſtant death if I refuſed compliance, to inform them in what places the richeſt effects were depoſited. There was no time allotted for reflection: they were formidably armed, and I ſhould have been guilty of the greateſt raſhneſs if I had made the leaſt reſiſtance: I, therefore, aſſured them, with humility ſuitable to the occaſion, that if they would give me leave to riſe, I would point out the places which they ſo much wanted to examine. Their ferocity was mollified by an anſwer ſo very ſatisfactory to them, and I, with their free permiſſion, prepared to put on my cloaths.

While I was dreſſing myſelf, the ſcreams of Martha pierced my ears, and at the ſame time pierced my heart: I ſhook with fear: I ſhuddered with horror; imagining that ſhe had, by oppoſing the brutal attacks of another party of the ſame complexion with thoſe

thoſe by whom I was attended, inſtigated them to the moſt inhuman treatment. One of my barbarous attendants, ſeeing me appalled and full of confuſion ſaid, with an infernal grin upon his countenance, Come, come, young gentleman, mind what you are about: your maid will not be the worſe for the uſage ſhe meets with from ſome of my friends above; I'll anſwer for their behaving like men of honour to her.

A ſecond ſcream, louder than the firſt, iſſued from the room over my head, and I then concluded that the poor girl was not only in the hands of raviſhers, but of murderers alſo—They are killing her cried I, with an acute elevation of my voice—No, no, replied the other miſcreant—we never deal in blood when we can poſſibly get what we want without it: we are no cut-throats—If we had intended to murder

the wench you would not have heard her pipes ſo ſhrill.

I was ſilenced; and not being without ſome apprehenſions, from the looks of them both, that if I did not proceed with expedition, my motions would be quickened in a very undeſirable way, I haſtened to acquaint them with the places which contained the moſt valuable effects, and they flew with rapidity to ranſack the boxes, cheſts, and drawers pointed out to their notice.

Think, madam, what a ſituation I was in to be a tame ſpectator of the pillage before my eyes, and to ſee thoſe things which were particularly eſteemed by you, becauſe they had been long in your poſſeſſion, torn from their concealments. In ſilent affliction I ſtood and ſaw the progreſs of the plunderers, not daring to ſolicit for the exemption of even a ſnuff-box or a necklace from the general ſeizure.

While

While I ſtood by in ſilence, my affliction was increaſed by the ceſſation of thoſe ſcreams which had ſo much alarmed me: for I had then no doubts concerning the fate of Martha. They have certainly murdered her, ſaid I to myſelf: her reſiſtance inſpired them with revenge.

My conjectures were too ſoon confirmed, for at that inſtant two ill-featured wretches, who ſeemed to be accuſtomed to ſanguinary deeds, entered the room, dragging in the poor unfortunate creature with as much unconcern as if ſhe had been a beaſt. Here, ſaid the rougheſt of them, let us clap her into that ſack there, we can throw her into the Sea when we get to our ſhip. His advice met with no oppoſition, and ſhe was accordingly tied up ready to be conveyed thither.

The whole detachment of theſe daring villains, twelve in number, was well mounted,

mounted, and each man had a led horſe, ſo that they could with great eaſe carry off the beſt part of the furniture and valuable effects.

When they were all ready to ſet off with their baggage, they inſiſted upon my backing the horſe which was unemployed upon the occaſion, and attending them. We reached the ſhip in a few hours, and our embarkation was completed with a dexterity and diſpatch which amazed me. As ſoon as I was on board, they compelled me to become a member of their illegal ſociety, and to take a ſolemn oath, that I would never, ſhould I ever be by any accident ſeparated from them, betray their ſecrets. The whole ſociety conſiſted of thirty; all men of deſperate fortunes, fierce in their manners, fearleſs of danger, and provided with all proper neceſſaries for piratical proceedings at Sea, and for making depredations on ſhore. Obſerving

Obſerving, among the thirty deſperadoes, when they were aſſembled together to initiate me into the myſteries of their corps, ſome men who had made their eſcape from the priſon at——, and whom I knew by their anſwering the printed deſcriptions of their perſons, I deemed it highly prudent to change my name, (becauſe my father was uncommonly active againſt them, and was principally inſtrumental in delivering them into the hands of juſtice) leſt they ſhould be prompted by revenge, when hearing the name of Morton, either to form plots againſt my life, or to render it inſupportable. I therefore called myſelf Dormer, and thought myſelf happy in not being detected in a falſity which was, I hoped, in my ſingular circumſtances, venial.

As the leaſt expreſſion of diſlike to my new employment would certainly have irritated my unfeeling aſſociates

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to make it more irkſome and diſagreeable to me, I had nothing to do but to appear quite ſatisfied with my condition, though I ſecretly abhorred the villanous occupation in which I was engaged. Policy naturally pointed out to me what meaſures I was to take with them, and I was lucky enough, by a cloſe attention to their different humours, to become, in a ſhort time, a favourite with them all. I ſeemed deſirous to be concerned in every naval attack, and in every deſcent upon the coaſts by which we ſailed. My courage, my intrepidity were ſuch powerful recommendations that I was frequently truſted with the management of an hazardous expedition. On all occaſions I exerted my courage and abilities, and endeavoured to make my prudence and my proweſs equally conſpicuous, though I often, very often was ſtruck with horror at the carnage to which I

was

was acceſſary in the proſecution of a dangerous enterprize. In our naval attacks I was ever ready to diſtinguiſh myſelf, but I was happier when a debarkation was commanded, becauſe at ſuch times I flattered myſelf that I might perhaps, by a ſucceſsful ſtratagem, quit a profeſſion againſt which humanity revolted.

The behaviour of my new companions to me was friendly, and generous. I had a conſiderable ſhare in every acquiſition, and I grew rich by the proſperity of wickedneſs. I grew rich, but the wealth which was acquired by iniquitious actions I could not enjoy: I was wretched whenever I reflected upon the manner in which I obtained it, and ardently wiſhed every moment to break my connections with a crew whom I from my ſoul abhorred.

I have ſaid that they were friendly and generous; they were ſo, but ſome reſtrictions,

reſtrictions, to which I was forced to ſubſcribe, gave me great diſquiet: among thoſe, the prohibition with regard to the exerciſe of my pen, was particularly mortifying.

Notwithſtanding the ſeverity of their injunctions, however, I one day wrote a letter to you, and another to my father, and kept them in my pocket in hopes of eluding their vigilance, and of finding an opportunity to forward them to you: but my intentions were fruſtrated by the information of an inferior perſon in the veſſel, who, being piqued at the applauſes which I received after a very deſperate engagement, watched my motions with a malicious aſſiduity, and having, by that aſſiduity, ſeen me when I was, I thought, alone, fold up my diſpatches and ſecrete them, went directly to our captain general and imparted to him the intelligence which he had diſhonourably procured.

Summoned

Summoned by the very perſon who had betrayed me, to make my appearance before the captain, I followed with promptitude, only imagining that I was going to receive orders about the conduct of a new atchievement: but how ſhall I deſcribe my ſurprize when he, darting a furious look at me, charged me with having infringed my oath? I was ſtupified; before I could open my lips in order to make a reply, he turned to his informant and cried with a ſtern voice, Search his pockets. Thoſe few words completely ſtunned me, and my lips were ſealed, while the letters were ſnatched from my waiſt-coat pocket with an alertneſs which ſufficiently expreſſed the ſatisfaction of the ſearcher.

The captain having received the letters, the ſight of which overwhelmed me with confuſion, diſmiſſed my betrayer, and immediately ſoftening at once his aſpect and his voice, with the

mildeſt accents reprimanded me for the infraction of my oath. None of us, continued he, hold a correſpondence with our relations or our acquaintance, that we may not be tempted to deſert the common cauſe which we have ſworn to make the ſole object of our attention. In order to adhere to each other with the greater firmneſs, we renounce all connections with the reſt of the world, whom we look upon in an hoſtile light, and whoever becomes a member of our ſociety muſt never violate the ſalutary laws which we have framed for our mutual intereſt. Little did I think, Dormer, added he, from the whole courſe of your behaviour ſince your incorporation with us, that you would have ſubjected yourſelf to a lecture of this kind, but as you have given more ſtriking proofs of valour and capacity than could rationally be expected from ſo inexperienced a youth, and as you have

have performed exploits from which we have reaped large advantages, I will take care that theſe papers (ſtretching out his hand) ſhall not appear to your prejudice.

At the concluſion of this ſpeech he tore my letters into a thouſand pieces, and threw them out of the cabin-window into the ſea.

There was ſomething in the captain's manner of behaving to me which bordered upon the heroic: he did not break my letters open; he did not even read the ſuperſcriptions of them, ſo that, after what he had ſaid, I had nothing to fear from an after-diſcovery.

I thanked him for having corrected me with ſo much gentleneſs, for the deviation which I had made from the laws to which I had ſubſcribed, and promiſed never to give him room to chaſtize me upon the ſame occaſion.

I am

I am ſatisfied, replied he: and you may be always ſure of my friendſhip as long as you deſerve it. The perſon who informed againſt you, being a neceſſary man, muſt not be diſcouraged from giving information when he finds any of our corps acting in defiance of our laws: I ſhall therefore take an opportunity to reward him for his vigilance, though he was, I knew, urged to communicate his intelligence to me from an envious diſpoſition. His intelligence, I own, ſurprized me, but I determined immediately to have a private interview with you; and in order to prevent the ill conſequences which might ariſe from the peruſal of your letters by my aſſociates, demoliſhed them.

Scarce had he finiſhed his reply when the repetition of a ſail, a ſail, by ſeveral hoarſe voices gave a new turn to his countenance. The hopes of freſh plunder animated

animated his features, and all the pyrate ſparkled in his eyes.

Where? where? cried he, ruſhing out of his cabbin. What ſize? how many guns? Theſe words were delivered with the utmoſt celerity of ſpeech, and he ſoon had the pleaſure of beholding an Engliſh merchant-man within half a league of him, which by her appearance would prove an eaſy conqueſt and a rich capture.

Every mariner was ready to do his duty with ſpirit. Our whole corps prepared with the greateſt alacrity to increaſe their naval conſequence, and longed, with an ardor which would have been in the higheſt degree commendable, if they had been going to attack the enemies of their country, to ſeize the prize which followed their avarice.

The maſter of the Jamaica-ſhip happening to be a man of uncommon intrepidity, waited for our approach in a poſture

poſture of defence, and returned our firſt broad-ſide with ſuch fury that our captain found he had no cowards to encounter; but undiſmayed at the havock which it made, he cried out to his comrades, Courage my brave boys: we have buſineſs upon our hands worth minding; here is glory as well as gain to be got.

Inflamed with this ſhort but inſpiring ſpeech, the ſailors, who ſtood to their guns, applied their matches inſtantaneouſly to them, and a tremendous diſcharge followed, but it was not deciſive. A ſecond broad-ſide from our adverſaries did too much execution among us, for ſeveral of our beſt hands were killed by it. Our captain, however, ſtill continued as little intimidated as he was before,, and with well-timed encomiums on the bravery of thoſe who remained, ſpurred them to point their thunder with redoubled activity. The

exploſion

exploſion was dreadful, and the ſignal of ſubmiſſion was ſoon hoiſted to our no ſmall ſatisfaction, having loſt more men than were ever deſtroyed in two firings in any of our engagements.

The Blooming Betſy was the name of the ſhip which ſtruck to us, ſhe was bound to England, and was indeed a valuable acquiſition: we haſtened with her to a port which we were aſſured would give us a favourable reception, in order to diſpoſe of the cargo and divide the ſpoils.

Upon our arrival, in the cloſe of the fineſt evening I ever beheld, our captain ordered a ſumptuous entertainment to be prepared, and invited the principal captives to be partakers of it.

While the preparations for the entertainment were making, I, on a ſudden conceived a deſign to turn it not only to my own advantage but to the advantage of thoſe who had been unfortu-

nately diverted from their intended voyage by falling in our way: I communicated my ſcheme to the maſter of the veſſel which we had overpowered, and he was almoſt ready to devour me for having ſtarted it. I acquainted him with circumſtances relating to my hiſtory ſufficient to convince him that I ſhould be extremely glad to be unconnected with a ſet of people whoſe principles I deteſted, and with whom I had been aſſociated very much againſt my will: and was happy to find that he formed no objections to the plan which I propoſed for my deſertion from them.

It will be no difficult matter, ſaid he, with a vivacity in his look which ſtrongly diſcovered the joy of his heart, when theſe robbers have drank themſelves into a ſtate of ſtupefaction to leave them in that ſtate and to recover our liberties. I ſhall, with the greateſt pleaſure,

ſure, give notice to my friends of this project for their releaſement from captivity, and inſtruct them in what manner to act ſo as to facilitate the execution of it. They will gladly unite with us upon ſo intereſting an occaſion, and I flatter myſelf that our operations will be crowned with ſucceſs.

He then left me to inform his friends and paſſengers of the converſation which had paſſed between us, and ſoon afterwards returned to tell me that they thought themſelves deeply indebted to me for a propoſal ſo much in their favour. I have given, added he, proper inſtructions to thoſe who have been invited by your captain to partake of his banquet, and they will, you may be aſſured, punctually obſerve them, as on the obſervance of them depends their reſtoration to freedom.

Captain Martin, the maſter of the Jamaica-man, having concerted the ne-

ceſſary meaſures with his own people for the renewal of his voyage, applied himſelf with ſo much ſagacity, as well as aſſiduity, to ſome of our ableſt ſailors, that they readily agreed upon very advantageous terms to betray their employers.

When matters were thus adjuſted, and when every perſon concerned in the plot glowed with an ardent deſire to ſhake off the yoke of ſlavery, a flouriſh with military muſic announced the moment devoted to feſtivity.

The table was ſpread with plenty; with profuſion; and the richeſt rarities which could be procured in that part of the world made their appearance.

The entertainers were in high ſpirits, becauſe they were fluſhed with the valuable booty which they had acquired, and the entertained were not leſs diſpoſed to merriment, becauſe they were flattered with the hopes of leaving them

them to lament the loſs of that booty in the agonies of diſappointment.

When the bottles and the bowls had moved briſkly about, and made no ſmall impreſſion on the intellects of the former, the latter, who had previouſly oiled their throats to prevent intoxication, gave the ſignal to the attendants in their pay, who produced freſh bottles and freſh bowls, the contents of which ſoon threw their ideas into the utmoſt confuſion, and in a ſhort time afterwards ſealed up their eyes.

When the thirty tyrants were diſpatched into the regions of oblivion, Martin ſprung out of his chair, and looking at me with a vivid countenance, Now my dear friend, ſaid he, now is the happy moment arrived for the completion of our deſigns: let us ſeize it and be free.

At the concluſion of the captain's brief and bold ſpeech, up roſe his

friends at once as if they had felt the electrical ſhock, and applauded his motion. We accordingly followed our lively leader with the ſincereſt ſatisfaction to his own ſhip, and were ſo fortunate as to quit a port only favourable to pyrates, in a few hours, with proſperous gales.

As I could not, without making a very unreaſonable requeſt, deſire Captain Martin to alter the courſe of his voyage, after it had been already retarded, and by ſo doing render himſelf liable to be called to an account for not fulfilling his articles, I ſaw our ſhip under ſail for England without repining, though I wiſhed to be conveyed to the iſland from which I had been forcibly removed, becauſe I pleaſed myſelf with thinking that we might probably meet in our paſſage a veſſel bound thither, and that I might be accommodated in it. With theſe hopes I was charmed while

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we ſkudded before the wind: the weather was remarkably fine, and I enjoyed many hours of ſweet ſpeculation, while I reflected on paſt, and imagined future ſcenes.

For ten days the agreeable weather, and my agreeable ſpeculations continued, but on the eleventh morning, after our eſcape from the ſhackles of ſervitude, the former was changed, and the latter were interrupted. A ſtorm aroſe, and an enemy appeared. As our ſhip was ſtrong-built, and had not performed many voyages, we rode through the tempeſt without receiving any conſiderable damage from it, but as a French man of war was ready to ſwallow us up, when we had nothing to apprehend from the agitation of the ſea, we could not feel in an eligible condition. To have prepared for defence would have been ridiculous, ſo great was the diſproportion between us in every reſpect:

our captain, therefore, very juſtly thought that his ſtriking would be the moſt prudent ſtep he could take, and that it would be no impeachment of his courage, of which, indeed, he had given the moſt convincing proofs in his engagement with the pyrates.

The French ſhip, we found, had been ſeparated from her companions, and was part of a little ſquadron deſtined to protect a ſettlement from a threatened invaſion: we were, therefore, under a neceſſity of returning to our American proſpects, and of giving up our European views, though we had more reaſon to be patient under our captivity than we had before, as the Commandant was a man of humanity, good-breeding, and good-nature. He ſent his ſecretary to intreat Captain Martin to honour him with his company, and, upon the captain's having mentioned me in a particular manner, my company was alſo

deſired

deſired ſoon afterwards with equal politeneſs. On the day following, the remainder of the ſquadron joined us, and a briſk gale ſwelling our canvas, we proceeded with a delightful velocity.

After a pleaſant paſſage, during which nothing of importance occurred, we arrived at the place, decreed by the chance of war for our impriſonment: the inhabitants received their protecting countrymen with the loudeſt burſts of joy, and, according to the genius of their nation, expreſſed that joy in the moſt groteſque manner: their natural vivacity was ſo much heightened upon the exhilerating occaſion, that their behaviour was, in the higheſt degree, fantaſtic.

Here, I met with ſeveral of my fellow-Engliſhmen in the ſame ſituation, but they diſſipated entirely the horrors of confinement, by aſſuring me that they were treated with as much indulgence as the nature of their con-

dition would admit of. I was doubly charmed with their aſſurances, becauſe I had been informed that the Engliſh, in durance there, groaned under the preſſure of their chains, and were treated with the greateſt rigour, not to ſay inhumanity. I was agreeably undeceived, and determined, from that hour, not to be too haſty in giving credit to reports againſt thoſe with whom we are in a ſtate of hoſtility; for the ſpreaders of ſuch reports are moſt commonly actuated only by national prejudices, and are too apt, while they are carried away by thoſe prejudices, to loſe ſight of truth.

The apprehenſions of the inhabitants of———, concerning an invaſion, were ſoon after the arrival of the ſquadron ſent to their protection, removed by their receiving intelligence that the force which they dreaded had been levelled againſt another ſettlement, but they

they were at the ſame time mortified with hearing that it had been ſucceſsfully levelled againſt it: they were grieved for the fate of their neighbours, little dreaming, while they ſaw half a dozen men of war parading before their eyes, that they were in more danger from the triumph of the conquerors, which they ſo pathetically deplored, by the acceſſion of ſtrength which they obtained by their victorious arms. They kept themſelves, however, in a poſture of defence, that they might not be taken by ſurprize, but they remained unmoleſted, for the Engliſh admiral, ſatisfied with having ſufficiently alarmed them, ſteered his courſe to a diſtant colony.

At the end of ſix months, I received ſome conſolation, by hearing that a ſhip from the iſland of——was among the captures juſt brought in from a cruize. My conſolation could not, you may imagine, madam, ariſe from the

humiliating condition to which ſhe was reduced by falling into the hands of our enemies, but I was in hopes of learning news about you or my father. I communicated my longings to the keeper of the priſon, who, having been himſelf once in my circumſtances, had feeling enough to pity them, and politely informed me that he would make ſtrict enquiries after the perſons whoſe names I delivered to him, without diſcovering that I was related to them, fearing that I might by ſo doing be treated in a different manner, as my father had drawn the reſentment of the governor upon him by detecting him in ſome illiberal proceedings, and making him appear in a very diſhonourable light.

The keeper, having punctually performed his promiſe, returned with an anſwer which filled me with all the flutter of expectation, for he told me that there was a lady among the priſoners

ners who was well acquainted with Mr, and Mrs. Morton, and could give a particular account of them. I preſſed for an interview with the lady, and my deſire was complied with.

Upon her entrance into the room, led in by the keeper, who with great civility hoped that I would excuſe him for inſiſting upon being preſent, as he could not poſſibly act otherwiſe without forfeiting his honour, which was, he ſaid, dearer to him than his life, I was very much ſurprized at the ſight of Miſs Dalton, whom you viſited before you left England.

Miſs Dalton? cried Mrs. Morton, interrupting her ſon, with an embarraſſed countenance, and a faultering voice.

Yes, madam, replied he, and ſhe ſtruck me with the agreeable *toutenſemble* of her appearance: (here Mrs. Morton fetched a deep ſigh) ſhe ſtarted and ſaid, Oh! Mr. Morton, how came you here?

At the name of Morton I changed colour, becauſe I was conſcious of having been guilty of deceit, though not with any ill deſign, and becauſe I was alſo afraid that the governor, who had a liſt of all the priſoners, would be doubly incenſed againſt me for my hypocriſy. Now diſconcerted by ſhame, now depreſſed by fear, I ſtood for ſome moments in mute confuſion.

The keeper, while I remained in that diſtreſsful attitude, took out his pencil, and delivered a little note to one of his attendants, who flew to obey his orders with the ſtrongeſt marks of ſenſibility characſtered in his face. Obſerving, however, as ſoon as I dared to raiſe my eyes from the floor, to which they had been rivetted, that Monſieur le Fevre ſurveyed me rather with compaſſion than reſentment, I anticipated no diſagreeable conſequences from the diſcovery of the ſecret which I had wiſhed

wiſhed to conceal, but proceeded to gratify my curioſity, by aſking Miſs Dalton whether ſhe could alleviate the pains of abſence from my parents, by imparting to me any good news about them.

At the cloſe of my ſpeech, which ſhe heard with the profoundeſt attention, ſhe ſhook her head, and cried, I wiſh ſir that I could impart agreeable intelligence to you concerning your parents, but my tidings will, I doubt, tend more to increaſe your uneaſineſs about them, than to remove it.

She informed me, when ſhe had related the tranſactions which happened after your ſurprizing her with my father at Mrs. Davis's, that from the time of your departure from him, to which you was, ſhe freely confeſſed, driven by the moſt aggravating provocations, he lamented the unkindneſs of his behaviour to you, and grew every day more

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and more diſturbed in his mind, bewailing alſo the uncertainty concerning my fate in the bittereſt terms: that he wrote ſeveral letters to you, which, by her vigilance, were all intercepted, and that, after having waited near a twelvemonth, wondering at your ſilence, he left the management of his office to his principal clerk, and embarked for England, without giving her notice of his intended voyage; only leaving a few lines to let her know that he had broken off all connections with her, which was accompanied with a purſe that ſhe might not be immediately perplexed for a ſubſiſtence.

Artful girl! ſaid Mrs. Morton, interrupting her ſon again—but I feel ſome compaſſion for her when I reflect upon the winning attractions of her ſeducer; eſpecially as ſhe had a child by him when I came away. Go on, however, my dear.

Miſs

Miſs Dalton, madam, continued he, then told me that the firſt peruſal of the lines which my father had written to her, made her almoſt mad with vexation, but that the ſecond melted her with ſorrow: that ſhe with redoubled grief regretted the loſs of her little boy, who died ſoon after your departure, as his death was attended with a decreaſe of my father's affections, and as the ſhock which her conſtitution received from it left him no hopes of having a ſucceſſor by her; that ſhe fluctuated a great while in a ſtate of the moſt diſtracting incertitude, pulled different ways by different paſſions, and that ſhe reſolved at laſt to embark for England, not doubting, but that my father was gone to urge a reconciliation with you whom he had ſo groſsly abuſed; that, in conſequence of her reſolution, ſhe procured a paſſage on board a veſſel which only waited for a favourable wind; that ſhe

was

was in a few days under ſail, but that a French man of war had ſtopped her progreſs before ſhe had been a week at ſea.

This, madam, is the ſubſtance of the intelligence which I received from Miſs Dalton, and it certainly did not contribute to the diminution of the uneaſineſs which I felt before ſhe related it.

I can eaſily believe, my dear ſon, ſaid Mrs. Morton, that Miſs Dalton's intelligence did not prove ſatisfactory to you—but I long to hear the ſequel of your hiſtory.

When Miſs Dalton had finiſhed her narrative, madam, the attendant, whom Le Fevre had diſpatched with his note, returned, and whiſpered ſomething in his ear. Le Fevre then came ſmiling up to me, and told me that the governor deſired to ſee me.

Starting at a meſſage for which I was not in the leaſt prepared, I cried with

with no ſmall emotion, The governor? I have not the honour to be known to him—but, after a ſhort pauſe, recollecting myſelf, I added, I am ready to pay my reſpects to him.

Le Fevre, then taking hold of Miſs Dalton's hand, eſcorted her with a profuſion of compliments to the ladies who were in the ſame predicament, and, having lodged them in appropriated apartments, came back to be my conductor.

As ſoon as I was introduced to the governor, he received me in a very obliging manner, and aſked me if I was the ſon of Mr. Morton at——, in the iſland of ——: having returned an affirmative anſwer, he advanced towards me, cordially embraced me, and aſſured me that he thought himſelf very happy in having an opportunity to reſtore me to the arms of a man whom he had formerly uſed ill, by reſenting his

his honeſt and patriotic behaviour, during the courſe of ſome commercial proceedings between the two iſlands. I have frequently, added he, bluſhed at the meanneſs, not to ſay want of integrity in my conduct, and have as frequently wiſhed to efface the bad impreſſions which it has unqueſtionably made on his mind with regard to my moral character. It is not in my power to blot the tranſactions, in the management of which I appeared in ſo unamiable a light, from his memory, but I very much hope that I ſhall, by diſtinguiſhing you his ſon with marks of my particular eſteem, induce him to alter his opinion concerning me, and make him, with the charity of a chriſtian, forgive the injuries which he cannot forget.

A becoming dignity of ſentiment ſhone in this ſpeech of the governor's through all the flouriſh of words with which

which it was encumbered, and I could not help being touched with his contrition. With leſs pomp, but with a true ſenſe of his partiality in my favour, I thanked him in the moſt forcible expreſſions I could think of, for ſo flattering a diſtinction, and intreated him to believe that I ſhould ever remember his civilities with the gratitude which they merited.

When I had poured forth my acknowledgments to him, which lighted up, I plainly ſaw, the ſmiles of ſatisfaction in his countenance, I acquainted him with as much of the intelligence which I received from Miſs Dalton as was ſufficient to convince him that he would not promote my happineſs by facilitating my return to——, you and my father, the only friends I ever had in that quarter of the globe being in all probability, at a conſiderable diſtance from it, and begged him to furniſh me with

with a paſſport to England, where I ſhould have the beſt chance to hear of, or to re-behold you. He very chearfully complied with my requeſt, and, as there was a ſloop on the point of ſailing with diſpatches to France, he recommended me to the care of the captain, who was under obligations to him, and deſired him, by making a ſmall deviation from his track, to land me at Liſbon. The addreſs of the governor in ſtarting ſo ingenious an expedient, in order to promote the fruition of my wiſhes, pleaſed me extremely, and I was doubly pleaſed by his having pitched upon the place in which my worthy god-father reſided, becauſe I was ſure of being well received by him, and becauſe he was, I knew, a man whoſe connections would enable him to convey me with the greateſt probable ſecurity to my native country.

When

When I had finiſhed the neceſſary preparations for my new voyage, I took leave of Miſs Dalton, who wiſhed me all imaginable happineſs, but could not help exclaiming with acrimony againſt my father's behaviour to her.

In my laſt interview with the governor, he affected me ſo much, by his noble and friendly deportment, that I was melted to tears. He earneſtly conjured me, with moiſtened eyes, to inform my father how ſeverely he had reproached himſelf for his paſt tranſgreſſions, and gave me a valuable ring for him, with an adapted motto, as a mark of his friendſhip, and as a proof of his repentance.

Loaded with preſents from my powerful protector and benefactor, the ſloop was in a few days under ſail, and ſoon after we had quitted the harbour of—, its buildings and its inhabitants were inviſible:

inviſible: with ſo much ſwiftneſs did we fly before the wind.

Flattered with the hopes of being in a fair way to viſit the ſcenes in which I paſſed the moſt joyous moments of my life, ſurrounded with indulgent relations, who ſtudied with the moſt unwearied diligence to find diverſion for me, and not a little animated by the velocity with which we were carried on, I felt myſelf in high ſpirits, which were rather increaſed than diminiſhed by the lively and entertaining prattle of a brother-paſſenger, a merchant of Breſt, who, with good natural parts, had great knowledge of the world: the captain too, himſelf, not being a man merely verſed in tar and ſea-weed, proved an excellent companion, ſo that I was quite contented with my ſituation.

When we had been near ſix weeks at ſea, the captain came to me one morning and told me that he hoped I would excuſe

excuſe him for not having complied with the governor of ——'s requeſt, by landing me at Liſbon, as he was afraid of being diſmiſſed from the ſervice, if the king's meſſenger on board, on being examined concerning the want of expedition in the ſloop, ſhould attribute it to his complaiſance to an Engliſh paſſenger. We are now, continued he, within a league of Breſt, where you will meet with an hoſpitable reception from an amiable aunt of mine, who lives in a very reſpectable manner with two daughters, and will be moſt cordially entertained by them on my account.

I was, you may imagine, madam, ſtartled at this unexpected apology of the captain's for his conduct, but as the reaſon he gave for not having conveyed me to Liſbon was, I thought, a plauſible one, and as he ſeemed deſirous to make me amends for my diſappoint-

ment, by rendering my reſidence in France agreeable, I told him that, tho' I ſhould have been better pleaſed with the performance of his promiſe to the governor of ——, I was not ſorry that he had conſulted his intereſt, by paying no regard to it, not wiſhing him to run the riſque of his diſmiſſion on my account. As to your friendly offer, ſir, added I, I ſhall accept of it with a great deal of pleaſure, being totally unacquainted with any perſon at Breſt or in any part of France.

The calmneſs with which I heard the defence of his behaviour, the compoſure with which I anſwered it, and the readineſs which I diſcovered to avail myſelf of his propoſed civility, gave him no ſmall ſatisfaction. He repeatedly aſſured me that I ſhould find myſelf extremely at home with his aunt and his couſins, and entered into a diſplay of their characters, which

ſerved

ſerved to make me believe that I ſhould not be diſagreeably ſituated with them.

Soon after this converſation had paſſed between us, we diſembarked, and I was, in about an hour, introduced by him to Madame Villeneuve, who received me in a manner perfectly polite, and welcomed me to France in terms which covered me with confuſion, for I could not, with equal copiouſneſs of language, or fluency of utterance, return the flowery compliments which ſhe laviſhed on me.

When I had occupied my new apartments about a fortnight, leſs and leſs diſſatisfied with my abode, the captain, (who, though he lodged in a diſtant quarter of the town, ſpent the greateſt part of his time with us) received commands from Verſailles to ſail away with all poſſible expedition with the meſſenger who accompanied them, as he

had freſh diſpatches of the utmoſt importance for the governor of——. The captain was at ſupper with us when he received his commands, but having been long accuſtomed to inſtant obedience, he took a hurrying leave of us, and repaired immediately to his ſloop.

The very next morning, the ſervant of the houſe informed me that a gentleman wanted to ſpeak with me: it was early, but I was fit to be ſeen, and deſired that he might be conducted to me. As ſoon as he entered the room, I with pleaſure recognized my lively companion, the merchant, who had by his good ſenſe and pleaſantry made my voyage from —— ſo amuſing. I ran to embrace him with open arms, and he returned my ſalutation with equal cordiality: but he then filled me with aſtoniſhment, by telling me, with a ſolemn face, that he had ſomething

of

of great conſequence to communicate to me.

I could not poſſibly conceive what he was going to ſay, after ſo ſerious an introduction, but begged him to be ſeated, and throwing myſelf into a chair by his ſide, waited with the utmoſt impatience for his communications.

You ſeem to be extremely ſurprized, ſir, continued he, at the manner of my addreſs, but I was ſo highly prejudiced in your favour during our voyage from ——, that I could not, when we parted, hear you order your baggage to Madame Villeneuve's without much uneaſineſs, though I could not, with any prudence, inform you of my feelings upon that occaſion, for the captain, being of a very revengeful diſpoſition, and a man who has high connections, would have proved a formidable enemy to me if I had oppoſed your going to

that lady's houſe, after he had ſo ſtrongly recommended her to you.

You amaze me, ſir, ſaid I: little did I think when I acquainted you with the captain's politeneſs in recommending me to his aunt and to his couſins, that you would have appeared thus anxious about my ſituation with them.

You are young, ſir, replied he—When you have ſeen as much of the world as I have, you will not be ſo haſty in giving credit to thoſe who profeſs a friendſhip for you, nor put yourſelf under their protection with ſo much confidence. Mrs. Villeneuve is not the captain's aunt, nor are the girls who live with her his couſins; neither the former nor the latter are, in any ſhape, related to him.

Bleſs me! ſaid I, your words fill me with aſtoniſhment—be quick in undeceiving me. Tell me with whom I am aſſociated, and if they are not the people

ple whom I have ſuppoſed them to be, the captain's relations, and people of character, be ſo good as to put me in a way to make a decent removal to a better place, without coming to an open rupture with them.

You have certainly, replied he, been groſsly miſtaken, but ſpeak very ſenſibly concerning your retreat from this houſe. I will, in a few words, tell you the plain ſtate of the affair; Mrs. Villeneuve is an infamous procureſs, and the girls who live with her are abandoned proſtitutes, however, they may have contrived, by the dexterity of their behaviour, to prevent you from entertaining ſuſpicions about them.

I ſtood for ſome moments unable to utter a ſyllable, ſo much was I ſhocked at the iniquity of the captain's conduct, and not thinking myſelf any longer ſafe with my female companions, intreated my kind undeceiver to facilitate

my eſcape from them.—As you have diſcovered ſo much regard for me, ſir, ſaid I, as to point out the dangers to which I was expoſed, you will, I hope, with equal friendlineſs, procure my admiſſion to more reputable apartments.

Monſieur la Touche, after having mentioned ſeveral particulars relating to the connections between the captain and Mrs. Villeneuve, and apologized for the tardineſs of his appearance to open my eyes in a ſatisfactory manner, told me that if I would accept of an apartment in his houſe till I could meet with an habitation more to my mind, I ſhould be treated with as much kindneſs as if I was his own ſon.

I was ſo moved by the generoſity of the good merchant's behaviour, that I hung over his neck, and while I poured out my grateful effuſions, watered it with my tears. He was melted too, and could not, for ſome moments, make himſelf

himſelf intelligible; when he could, he aſſured me that he thought himſelf very happy in having it in his power to give me aſſiſtance in ſuch critical circumſtances.

After having thanked him in the moſt forcible terms for his very friendly offer, which I accepted of with the greateſt pleaſure, I conſulted him with regard to the day of my departure, and we were both of opinion that a precipitate retreat might, probably, inſpire Mrs. Villeneuve and her attendants with malevolent deſigns: he therefore went home in order to prepare things for my reception, the beginning of the following week having been pitched upon for my removal, till which time I determined to make no variation in my behaviour to them.

When I appeared at dinner, Mrs. Villeneuve carried herſelf to me with her uſual complaiſance, but ſhe ſeemed

to be frequently diſconcerted, and actually made ſeveral miſtakes in doing the honours of her table: but as I attributed the negligencies in her deportment to ſome private diſquietudes, I made no reflections upon them, but, as I had formed my plan of behaviour, enjoyed the preſent moment with as much apparent unconcern as if I did not beſtow a ſing'e thought upon futurity. The evening cloſed with mutual complaiſance, and I was not ſorry to repoſe upon my pillow, in order to ruminate, undiſturbed, upon the intelligence which I had received from Monſieur la Touche.

Long, however, I did not lie to ruminate on my pillow, for I ſoon felt an unuſual weight upon my brows which deadened the powers of thinking.

When I waked, I was harrowed up with amazement, for inſtead of being in my chamber at Mrs. Villeneuve's, ſurrounded with the elegant accommo-

dations

dations of a gentleman, I found myſelf cooped up in a little room, the cieling of which I could touch with my extended hand as I lay in my bed, with bare walls, mean furniture, and a grated window. Had I been of a romantic turn I ſhould certainly have imputed the change in my condition to the power of enchantment, but as I was in my ſober ſenſes, I could not poſſibly, by rational conjectures, account for the horrid novelty of the ſcene.

I ſtrained my faculties to account for the ſudden alteration in my circumſtances, but the more I ſtrained them, the greater was the perplexity of my ideas.

While I was thus employed in the fruitleſs exerciſe of my intellects, a very ill-featured fellow opened the door of my dungeon, for ſo it appeared to me, and in a very inſolent manner ordered me to riſe directly and follow him.

My blood ſtarted, I own, at the roughneſs of his behaviour, and I deſired, with ſome warmth, to know what authority he had over me.—He grinned at the word authority, and with an infinite deal of ſatisfaction in his withered countenance, produced a paper, by which I was immediately ſilenced. I dreſſed, and followed him to the Commandant of one of the forts, who informed me that I was ſent to him by Mrs. Villeneuve, as a man who had ſpoken very freely againſt the French government, and that I muſt remain in cuſtody there till he received orders from court concerning the puniſhment to be inflicted upon me for my imprudence.

Struck at the perfidy of Mrs. Villeneuve, I forgot that I was in a place of confinement, and after having bitterly exclaimed againſt her treacherous and unjuſt behaviour, moved briſkly towards the door, declaring that I would

make her repent of her ſcandalous proceedings againſt me.

Stay, ſir, ſaid the Commandant, with a taunting accent, you forget, I believe, that you are my priſoner.

At the word priſoner I ſtopped, hung my head, and ſighed; then raiſing my eyes from the ground, I told him that, as he had the appearance of a gentleman, I expected as much indulgence from him as he could, conſiſtently with the duty of his ſtation, favour me with.

I ſhall treat you, ſir, replied he, like an Engliſhman, and like an enemy to France.

At the concluſion of this ſhort, but cutting ſpeech, he remanded me to my dungeon, to which I retired full of melancholy reflections, and making compariſons between the carriage of the two men under whoſe hands I had fallen as a priſoner, much to the diſadvantage of him whom I had juſt quitted.

After

After a tedious confinement, during which I was treated with the greateſt rigour, and ſcantily ſupplied with the bare neceſſaries of life, I was one morning informed by the Commandant that I might leave the fort when I pleaſed: when he had thus abruptly given me my freedom, he put a couple of louis d'ors into my hand, and adviſed me as a friend, to be more cautious in my conduct while I remained in France.

The mildneſs of the Commandant's behaviour to me, while he gave me his money and his advice, puzzled me extremely; there was a myſterioufneſs in it which I could not develop: I therefore made haſte to avail myſelf of the favourable moment, and, having thanked him for releaſing me from captivity, departed from a place which will never be eraſed from my memory.

As

As ſoon as I found myſelf at liberty I directed my ſteps towards the houſe of my worthy friend the merchant, to acquaint him with the treatment which I had met with, and to aſk his advice how to proceed againſt the vile authoreſs of my ſufferings at the fort: however, when I came to Mrs. Villeneuve's houſe I could not help ſtopping at it. She opened the door herſelf: I began immediately to upbraid her for having behaved to me in ſo atrocious a manner, and demanded all the moveables of mine which ſhe had in her poſſeſſion. ſhe ſtared at me in an attitude of aſtoniſhment, and, having declared with the moſt finiſhed aſſurance, that ſhe had never ſeen me before, flapped the door in my face.

Stung with the impudence of her carriage, and the inſolence of her reply, I proceeded full of anger and reſentment to Mr. la Touche's, who, indeed,

ſtarted

ſtarted a little at the ſight of me, and by ſo doing really made me believe that I was ſtrangely altered. My ſubſiſtence at the fort had, 'tis true, much lowered the natural freſhneſs of my complexion, and much corrected my tendency to corpulence, but I was not quite ſo frenchified, I thought, in my outward form, as to occaſion any ſurprize in thoſe who knew me before I was dieted out of my Engliſh appearance.

Mr. la Touche was overjoyed to ſee me, and when I had informed him of the ſevere uſage which I had received from the Commandant (for the two louis d'ors but poorly recompenſed me for the unjuſtneſs of his former behaviour) in conſequence of Mrs. Villeneuve's falſe charge againſt me for ſpeaking too freely againſt the government, he lifted up his hands and eyes and cried, What an execrable wretch!

But

But when I conſulted him how to proceed, for the recovery of my moveables, he ſhook his head, and added, Ah! my dear friend, you muſt not think of reſtitution: ſhe is too powerfully protected here to be brought to the puniſhment ſhe deſerves for the many acts of injuſtice which ſhe has committed: the captain who recommended you to her, and the Commandant to whom ſhe conveyed you while you were aſleep, are not the only friends: ſhe has alſo perſons of much higher rank to ſupport her in the proſecution of her iniquities. Be not, however, continued he, dejected at this intelligence; all the French are not like thoſe of whom I have been talking: in me you ſhall find a true friend, till you have an opportunity to return to England: whatever my houſe can afford, in order to make your reſidence in it agreeable, ſhall be very much at your ſervice.

I was

I was overwhelmed with gratitude, and thanked him in the ſtrongeſt terms for his kind aſſurances, but told him, at the ſame time, that I could not bear to live at his expence, without doing ſomething to merit a ſubſiſtence under him. Employ me ſir, ſaid I, in your compting-houſe, and I will endeavour, though I had not a commercial education, to be uſeful with my pen and my parts to you.

Monſieur la Touche embraced me tenderly, and ſaid, that he loved me better for diſcovering ſo induſtrious and laudable a diſpoſition, and from that moment I applied myſelf with pleaſure to mercantile affairs.

I was very happy in my new ſituation, but I was born to be the ſport of fortune. Soon after my reſidence at Mr. la Touche's, he was obliged, by the failure of two houſes, the one at Leghorn, the other at Barcelona, to ſtop payment,

payment, and found himſelf involved, by thoſe failures, in ſuch difficulties and diſtreſſes, that he was totally unable to go on. Calling, therefore, all his creditors together, he reſigned all his effects to them, who behaved with the utmoſt humanity and kindneſs to him, and, having adjuſted his affairs in ſuch a manner as to give the ſtrongeſt proofs of his integrity, prepared to ſet out to the houſe of a brother who lived at Bourdeaux, and who preſſed him earneſtly to enter into partnerſhip with him. I accompanied him at his requeſt—He had no family, and treated me as if I was his ſon: he had been married, and had been bleſſed with children, but he had ſurvived them all.

In the duſk of the evening of our ſecond day's journey, while we were riding through a thick wood, a band of robbers overtook us, and, making us get off, ſeized all that they could find about us:

us: we had but little, and they abuſed us for not having more. One of the gang, who ſeemed to be their leader, perceiving that I was young and not ill-made, ſaid to his companions, This lad may be of ſervice to us; but as for that old fellow, he deſerves to be tied to one of theſe trees for travelling with ſo ſmall a quantity of money.

As ſoon as theſe words were out of his mouth, a couple of the horſemen immediately diſmounted, took cords out of their pockets, and tied my poor friend to one of the trees, in ſpite of all his moving intreaties not to behave to him with ſo much inhumanity, and in ſpite of my earneſt prayers to enforce them.

I was then ordered by the leader of the corps to mount my horſe, to take the bridle of my friend's in my hand, and to follow him, without murmuring at my fate, aſſuring me that, if I behaved with ſpirit, I ſhould not want encourage-

encouragement, and that he would ſoon put me into the road to riches.

The ſame implicit obedience was neceſſary here which had been ſo neceſſary when I was incorporated among the pyrates: I followed the orders which I could not diſpute, but I ſighed heavily when I departed from the ſpot on which I left ſo good a friend in ſuch grievous circumſtances.

Riding along, the captain of the corps aſked me ſeveral queſtions with regard to my perſonal bravery, and ſeemed to be very well ſatisfied with my anſwers.

After having been engaged in a variety of adventures with my new aſſociates, from which we generally returned ſucceſsful, and after having made ſeveral fruitleſs attempts to eſcape them, as I abhorred the means by which I ſubſiſted in their ſervice, I had recourſe to the ſtratagem which was, I concluded,

played

played againſt me at Mrs. Villeneuve's, or I could not have been, I think, conveyed from thence to the fort in a ſtate of inſenſibility: the liquor which was prepared for the occaſional refreſhment of thoſe who guarded our flying camp, that we might not be ſurprized in our tents, I contrived to render ſoporific, by the infuſion of opiates, and my contrivance ſucceeded.

As ſoon as the ſentinels were faſt aſleep, I mounted the ſwifteſt ſteed which I could find, and rode off with the utmoſt expedition, highly rejoiced to fly from ſo formidable a body of men who braved all laws divine and human, and who committed the moſt violent outrages againſt ſociety with impunity.

At break of day, I found myſelf upon enquiry, for I had galloped away without knowing whither I was going, and was come to a part of the country which

which I had never ſeen before, in the direct road to Bourdeaux: I was much pleaſed with that intelligence, becauſe I had no reaſon to doubt of a friendly reception there by making myſelf known to the brother of my unfortunate friend, Monſieur la Touche, concerning whom I was alſo in hopes of hearing ſome tidings.

When I arrived at the poſt-houſe at Bourdeaux, I was ſoon informed of Monſieur la Touche's habitation, for his connections as a merchant were conſiderable. He received me very politely, and upon my intreating him to pardon the liberty which I had taken in waiting on him, as I was inexpreſſibly anxious about his amiable brother, having been obliged to leave him in calamitous circumſtances, which I minutely deſcribed, embraced me with a parental cordiality, and told me that I ſhould be his gueſt, 'till I was tired of

his

his company. My poor brother, continued he, how would he be tranſported to ſee you!—but we muſt ſubmit to the decrees of Providence.

He then conducted me into a parlour, and, having aſſured me in the ſtrongeſt terms that he would endeavour to make my ſtay at Bourdeaux agreeable, deſired me to amuſe myſelf with ſome extremely-elegant prints from capital paintings, till he gave a few neceſſary orders to his clerks. He was not long abſent, he returned in a few minutes, but I will not attempt to deſcribe what I felt when I ſaw him advancing to me with my dear friend his amiable brother in his hand—We ruſhed into each others arms, and burſt into tears.

Here Morton was ſo much moved by the recollection of ſo tender a ſcene, that he pauſed and wept: but in a ſhort time proceeded in the following manner.

As

As I ſoon grew very deſirous to make enquiries after my relations in England, after my arrival at Bourdeaux, I, with the aſſiſtance of the elder Monſieur la Touche who had correſpondents in Holland, ſent ſeveral letters to Mr. and Mrs. Belton, but received no anſwers, and was therefore forced to remain in a ſtate of the moſt mortifying uncertainty concerning them, concerning you, and concerning my father.

In about a month after my reſidence at Monſieur la Touche's, the worthy brothers, perceiving that the frequent diſappointments which I had received on the arrival of the mails from Holland, had very much lowered my ſpirits, employed themſelves with a winning aſſiduity to raiſe them, and to render my ſituation leſs irkſome. One morning the elder Mr. la Touche told me that he always made an annual viſit to Paris, that he ſhould ſet out towards

that city in a few days, and that he ſhould be glad if I would favour him with my company. If you have never been at Paris, ſaid he, you will be charmed with it. He then launched out in praiſe of its grandeur and its elegance with a warmth of language very allowable, as he was a Frenchman, and added, that I ſhould be quite another thing there. I made proper acknowledgments to him for all his kindneſſes to me, and, when the day fixed for our departure arrived, we proceeded, that is, the two Mr. la Touches and myſelf, to the metropolis of France.

Before I had been a fortnight at Paris I had an opportunity to exert that courage upon a juſt, which I had often, but ever againſt my will, exerted upon an unjuſt occaſion. Paſſing through one of the ſtreets in my return from the opera, I reſcued an Engliſh gentleman from the hands of ruffians who

ſurrounded

ſurrounded him. I was not ſorry to find him to be the ſame by whoſe converſation I had been agreeably entertained at the theatre, and he ſeemed to be not a little pleaſed to have been protected by one of his own countrymen. In ſhort, madam, from that moment Mr. Bloſſom, for it was him whom I had reſcued, loaded me with civilities, and as he was going to make the tour of Italy, intreated me to increaſe the pleaſure of it by attaching myſelf to his party. I readily conſented, not having any local ties, and, at my departure from Paris, received from Mr. la Touche letters of recommendation to ſeveral Italian houſes which proved to be very ſerviceable to me. As I deſpaired of ſeeing you and my father again, I could not bear to think of the name of Morton, and therefore travelled with that which I had politically aſſumed before I came into Europe. To conclude, we

arrived about ſix weeks ago at Roſe-Place; and you are no ſtranger, I believe, to the occurrences there, during the latter part of that time, which have produced ſo unexpected a diſcovery. Happy, inconceivably happy am I, madam, in beholding again ſo amiable a parent, whom I ever, with the greateſt ſincerity, loved, honoured and eſteemed; and I return my moſt grateful thanks to heaven for ſo tranſporting an event. As we have been ſo long ſeparated from each other, moſt fervently do I pray that we may never ſuffer another ſeparation.

Mrs. Morton, having liſtened with the ſtricteſt attention to her ſon's narrative, and diſcovered, by the variations of her features, while he related his adventures, the various emotions which they occaſioned in her breaſt, joined her thanks to heaven with the moſt lively expreſſions of gratitude for having reſtored

ſtored him to her affectionate arms after ſo long an abſence, and with tears of tranſport wept over while ſhe fondly embraced him. She then, at his earneſt deſire, gave a full account of the difficulties which ſhe had herſelf encountered, and the diſquietudes which ſhe had endured from the fatal night of his ſeizure, to the fortunate moment in which ſhe attracted, in the midſt of the moſt mortifying wretchedneſs, the notice of the benevolent, and generous Mrs. Bamſted: but ſhe was frequently obliged to ſtop, during her relation, and to give a free paſſage to the floods of grief which iſſued from her eyes, on her recollecting ſcenes particularly pathetic. When ſhe had finiſhed her ſtory, many parts of which moved the attentive hearer of it in a very forcible manner, ſhe ſaid, preſſing his hand tenderly between hers, I ſhould now, my dear ſon, be completely happy were I but bleſſed

with the ſight of Mr. Morton, for, according to the intelligence which you received from Miſs Dalton, he departed from ——, with repentant ſenſations. He too, perhaps, has been involved in a variety of diſtreſſes, has been plunged into a thouſand dangers in the ſearch of us—Perhaps he is no more—I ſubmit to the will of Providence with the reſignation of a chriſtian, but I cannot, while nature powerfully ſtirs within me, diveſt myſelf of the feelings of a woman and a wife.

At the concluſion of this ſpeech, the converſation, between Mrs. Morton and her ſon, was interrupted by the arrival of a ſervant from Mr. Bamſted, with a note addreſſed to the latter.

Morton was almoſt as much ſurprized to ſee a note from Mr. Bamſted addreſſed to him, as if he had been ſtung by an adder, and could not poſſibly gueſs at the contents of it, being afraid to flatter

flatter himſelf that he had acted agreeably to his aſſurances to Mr. Shipton. With haſte, however, he unfolded it, for his curioſity was equal to his deſpondence; and found the following lines:

"Mr. Bamſted preſents his compliments to Mr. Dormer, and would be glad to have half an hour's converſation with him. Mr. Bamſted, not being quite recovered from the diſorder which attacked him laſt night, is not able to leave his houſe, or would have waited on Mr. Dormer."

Morton, after the peruſal of the above lines was, if poſſible, more ſurprized than he was before. The civility which ran through it, and which he ſo little expected from a man of Mr. Bamſted's caſt, filled him with amazement, but it alſo gave a ſpring to his ſpirits, and made him draw pleaſing conſequences from it.

As politeneſs, he thought, required, a written anſwer, he drew up the ſubſequent one immediately.

"Mr. Dormer returns his compliments to Mr. Bamſted, is very ſorry to find that he is not able to come abroad, and will do himſelf the pleaſure to wait on him in a ſhort time."

When he had diſpatched the ſervant with this anſwer, he directed his eyes towards his mother, and ſaid, What do you think, madam, of this note of Mr. Bamſted's?

I am willing to think, my dear, replied ſhe, that Mr. Bamſted, having diſcovered to whom he was ſo much obliged laſt night, perhaps for the preſervation of his life, is determined not to falſify what he ſaid to Mr. Shipton concerning his daughter, and concerning you, whom he had not then ſeen. Probably the dangerous ſituation of his daughter, and the ſhock which his own

own conſtitution has received, have occaſioned a total change in his ſentiments; and probably the ſufferings of the man have contributed to extinguiſh the reſentment of the parent. But unleſs the former and the latter have extinguiſhed the paſſion of avarice from his boſom, you will not, I am afraid, with all your merit, recommend yourſelf to his attention.

Mrs. Morton ſtopped here, becauſe ſhe perceived her ſon's features turned into an arch ſmile, who, on being intreated to explain the cauſe of it, ſaid, I ſmile madam, to think how agreeably you will be ſurprized to hear that I ſhall make no contemptible figure in Mr. Bamſted's eyes by the diſcloſure of my circumſtances.

He then pulled out his pocket-book, and produced the paper which Sir Harry Bloſſom had, with the true ſpirit of generoſity, and with the moſt refined

politeneſs compelled him to receive from his liberal hands.

Mrs. Morton expreſſed the higheſt ſatisfaction at the ſight of Sir Harry's draught, and told her ſon, laughing, that he could not carry a better recommendation with him to Crab-Hall.

END of the THIRD BOOK.

THE

THE

HISTORY

OF

Mr. MORTON *and* Miſs BAMSTED.

BOOK IV.

CHAP. I.

WHEN Morton arrived at Crab-Hall, he was with great reſpect, which had no bad appearance, conducted by the ſervant into the library, where he found Mr. Bamſted ſitting upon a couch, who roſe at his entrance and made a verbal apology for not having waited on him in perſon, to thank him for the tenderneſs of his

behaviour to him on the preceding evening, when he was not in a condition to acknowledge his obligations to him. By a viſit from my neighbour Shipton, Mr. Morton, continued he, this morning, I was not a little pleaſed to hear that the man who had ſo generouſly exerted his humanity in my behalf, was the man with whoſe company I had been ſo agreeably entertained at his houſe, and the man concerning whom I was determined to make enquiries on my daughter's account: enquiries I have made, ſir, with regard to your perſonal merit, which have proved ſatisfactory, and if you can double the fortune which I intend to give with Almeria, as ſome recompence for the great uneaſineſs which ſhe has long endured from my oppoſition to her inclination, I ſhall not be diſpoſed to retard your union.

Name your ſum, ſir, ſaid Morton eagerly.

Five

Five thouſand pounds, Mr. Morton, replied he, laying no ſmall emphaſis upon each of the three words.

You have made me the happieſt man in the world ſir, and I beg that your lawyer may have immediate inſtructions to draw up the ſettlement according to your demand.

He then acquainted Mr. Bamſted with the true ſtate of his affairs, who was ſo much pleaſed with the openneſs of his behaviour upon the occaſion, that he told him he ſhould not repent of coming into his family.—Morton, having been too well informed about Mr. Bamſted's character not to comprehend what he meant by not repenting, expreſſed himſelf in terms which did him no diſſervice.

Mr. Bamſted, having touched the bell, ordered the ſervant, who obeyed the ſummons, to let his miſtreſs know that

that her company was desired in the library.

Mrs. Bamsted soon appeared, and received the highest delight from the intelligence which her husband communicated to her concerning the disposal of her daughter:—How is Almeria? continued he.—Much better, replied Mrs. Bamsted; the late alteration in your carriage to her, however, has given a new turn to her ideas, and has raised her spirits, and these glad tidings will, I am sure, contribute more to her entire recovery than all the prescriptions of her physicians: though they certainly have been very efficacious.

Just at this instant, Mrs. Bamsted was told that a lady wished to speak with her.—As Morton very much wanted to impart the news which swelled his bosom to his mother, he took leave both of Mr. and Mrs. Bamsted, and told them, that he hoped he should be

permitted

permitted to pay his reſpects to Miſs Bamſted, as ſoon as ſhe was able to bear the ſight of him without being painfully agitated by it.

CHAP. II.

WHEN Mrs. Bamſted entered the room in which Mrs. Morton was waiting for her, ſhe ſtarted, and ſaid, O dear madam, I wiſh my ſervant had told me that you was here.

Don't chide your ſervant, madam, replied ſhe, for not announcing my name, I particularly deſired him not to mention it.

I will not chide him then, ſaid Mrs. Bamſted, but I cannot help wiſhing again that I had known of your being here before Mr. Dormer went away, that you might have given him joy, as

he

he is, I am well aſſured, a favourite of yours, and he indeed deſerves all the fine things which you have dropped in his favour.

Give him joy? madam, replied Mrs. Morton, has he then been ſo fortunate as to make himſelf appear worthy enough in Mr. Bamſted's eyes, to be received into his family as a relation?

He has, madam, ſaid Mrs. Bamſted, and the preliminaries are ſettled between them to their mutual ſatisfaction.

Mrs. Morton, overpowered by the gladdening news, after having been juſt able to ſay with a faultering voice, Thank heaven!—leaned her head againſt her friend's ſhoulder, and in that attitude expreſſed the felicity of her heart by a flood of tears.—Mrs. Bamſted, very much at a loſs to account for the extraordinary manner in which Mrs. Morton expreſſed the pleaſure ſhe felt at the proſpect of Mr. Dormer's union with Almeria,

Almeria, could not refrain from ſaying, I am truly rejoiced, madam, to ſee you intereſt yourſelf ſo deeply in my happineſs, which, you have long known, depends greatly on that of my daughter; but pardon me, if I add, that you excite my wonder by ſympathizing with me upon the pleaſurable occaſion like a tender mother, as well as like an affectionate friend.

Oh! madam, ſaid ſhe, raiſing her head, when I entered your houſe this morning, I came with an intention only to learn the reſult of the interview between the amiable lover of Almeria and Mr. Bamſted: I did not deſign to impart the ſecret which I am now going to diſcloſe, becauſe it is now quite unneceſſary to conceal it.—You have ſaid, madam, that I ſympathize with you as a tender mother: I do, indeed, feel all the ſenſations of a tender mother upon this occaſion, for Almeria's lover is—

yes—

yes—he is—my ſon: Heaven, whoſe ways are inſcrutable by the human underſtanding, has reſtored him to my fond arms: this very morning produced the intereſting diſcovery; and I cannot be too grateful to Heaven for ſo happy an event.

You amaze me, madam, ſaid Mrs. Bamſted, with this unlooked-for intelligence, but you alſo charm me with it. Let me fly to acquaint Mr. Bamſted with the unexpected news—How delighted will my dear Almeria be to hear it!

I have no objection, madam, replied Mrs. Morton, to your communicating it to Mr. Bamſted, becauſe he has ſtrength of mind ſufficient to bear ſurprizes of this ſort: but do not ſuddenly, do not abruptly impart it to Almeria, leſt her gentle frame ſhould be too much ſhaken, and her recovery retarded by it.

Mrs.

Mrs. Bamſted, upon recollection, was thoroughly ſenſible of the propriety of Mrs. Morton's caution with regard to Almeria, and therefore aſſured her that ſhe would endeavour, with the moſt delicate addreſs, to deliver the occurrences of the morning to her.

Mrs. Morton then chuſing to let her friend relate what ſhe had heard to her huſband, without being preſent while ſhe was ſo employed, wiſhed her a good day, and returned to her humble dwelling full of the moſt agreeable ideas that can poſſibly ariſe in the human mind, to ſhare her ſon's ſatisfactions and to give vent to her own.

CHAP.

CHAP. III.

WHEN Mrs. Bamſted, after the departure of Mrs. Morton entered the library, her huſband, who was writing a letter to his lawyer, perceiving by the eagerneſs in her aſpect that ſhe was ready to burſt for want of utterance, and that ſhe politely kept her lips cloſed as ſhe ſaw him buſy, laid down his pen, that ſhe might give a free ſcope to her ſpeech. When ſhe had repeated what Mrs. Morton had told her, he cried, with an elevation of his eye-brows, expreſſive of ſurprize, You don't ſay ſo?—This is indeed an unexpected event, but I am not diſpleaſed with it, as it will tend to increaſe my good girl's happineſs, when it is, with the buſineſs which I am about, diſcloſed to her. Mrs. Morton

Morton has not leſſened my opinion of her judgment by her cautionary hint; I hope, therefore, that you will make a proper uſe of it. She is a ſenſible, worthy woman, and will do no diſcredit to my family by being more intimately connected with it. Who would have thought of Dormer's proving to be her long-loſt ſon? How ſtrange are the revolutions in the affairs of mankind in this chequered world?—Go, my dear, continued he, to Mrs. Bamſted, and avail yourſelf of a lucky moment to make Almeria as happy as ſhe deſerves to be.

Mrs. Bamſted then went to her daughter's chamber, and left her huſband to finiſh his diſpatches to the Temple.

Mrs. Bamſted, obſerving a complacency in Almeria's face, which ſeemed to ariſe from an unuſual ſerenity of mind, told her that ſhe was glad to ſee her look with ſuch an air of content-

ment,

ment, and aſſured her that her father continued with diſpoſitions according to her wiſhes.

I am thoroughly ſatisfied, madam, ſaid Almeria, with what my father has ſaid, and with what he has done: and very much deſire to throw myſelf at his feet to thank him for the ſtrong proofs he has given of his returned affection for me.

Mrs. Bamſted knowing that, before the arrival of Mr. Morton, in compliance with the note directed to Mr. Dormer, Almeria was rather in a doubtful ſituation, and not void of apprehenſion left her father's predilection for Mr. Shipton ſhould cruſh the hopes with which ſhe had flattered herſelf, could not account for the total eaſineſs of her appearance, as ſhe had not been preſent at the interview deciſive in her favour. You look, my dear, ſaid ſhe, as happy as if your doubts were all removed,

moved, and as if you did not fear a relapſe from an alteration in your father's ſentiments concerning your two lovers.

Almeria had not, indeed, been preſent at the deciſive interview above-mentioned, but ſhe had heard the converſation which paſſed at it from the mouth of her maid, who, having a ſincere regard for her, and being ſpurred by curioſity, planted herſelf in ſuch a poſition as to liſten, undiſcovered, to what tranſpired in the library.

I am indeed, madam, replied, Almeria ſmiling, quite happy, for all my doubts are removed, and I am not in the leaſt apprehenſive of a relapſe: you look as if you wondered at my perfect tranquility, but I will ſoon convince you that it is not occaſioned by a deluſion of the fancy—Anne has informed me of what paſſed between my father and Mr. Dormer in the library: don't be angry, however,

however, with the faithful girl, for ſhe liſtened, I dare ſay, from her anxiety concerning my happineſs.

Mrs. Bamſted was not ſorry to find that half the intelligence which ſhe had to communicate to her daughter had been previouſly related to her, as Almeria would be in a frame of mind not to be dangerouſly agitated by the remainder of it; with which ſhe was, evidently, not acquainted, by having called her lover Dormer.

Angry, my dear? replied ſhe. No—the regard which Anne has always diſcovered for you, is a ſufficient apology for the ardor of her curioſity. But though ſhe has made you ſo happy by her information, I have a ſtrong notion that I can increaſe your felicity by a little ſupplemental anecdote which I picked up, in a tete-a-tete with Mrs. Morton, when the interview in the library was over.

Almeria,

Almeria, not imagining that her felicity could be poſſibly increaſed by any ſubſequent information, looked at her mother as if ſhe wondered at her for entertaining ſo ſtrange a ſuppoſition.

You may ſtare at me, my dear, but if I am not very much miſtaken in my conjectures you will receive an addition to the pleaſure which you at preſent feel, by being told that your lover is the ſon of Mrs. Morton.

Are you ſerious, madam? ſaid Almeria.

Never more ſo, my dear.—Have I been wrong in my conjectures?

No—madam—I receive indeed an additional ſatisfaction from your intelligence, but you muſt give me leave to ruminate upon the ſingularity of the event.

CHAP. IV.

WHEN Morton had taken leave of Mr. Bamſted, he began to conſider that the inſtructions to his lawyer could not be properly executed for want of the diſcovery of his real name: he, therefore, haſtened back to his mother in order to convince her how neceſſary it was to make that diſcovery without delay. He was ſurprized not to find her in her apartment, concluding that ſhe would have ſtaid at home till his return from the hall, as ſhe was ſo much intereſted in his viſit to it. He queſtioned Mrs. Woodly very cloſely about her, but could not learn whither ſhe had directed her ſteps. The uncertainty concerning her motions doubled his perplexity, but as he could not

not be at eaſe till he had ſeen her, he ſat down and ſpent the time in wiſhing anxiouſly for her preſence. After having occupied alternately every chair in the room; after having made frequent approaches to the window, and ſeveral ſtrides to the end of the gravel-walk which fronted the houſe, he ſaw her, at a conſiderable diſtance, advancing homewards: but not having a ſufficient ſtock of patience to enable him to wait for her near approximation, he flung open the outer gate, and, as he was naturally ſwift-footed, ſoon came up to her—Soon did he come up to her, but not ſoon was he in a condition to make himſelf intelligible for want of breath.

Mrs. Morton, attributing his expedition to his filial affection, and not to any particular impulſe, deſired him not to be in a hurry.—But I am in a great hurry, replied he, with difficulty pronouncing thoſe words: after the delivery

of which he was forced, in ſpite of his impatience, to ſtay a few moments, till the powers of articulation became more vigorous.

When he had imparted what had ſo long ſtruggled for emiſſion, ſhe, ſmiling, ſaid to him, O my dear, if you have nothing more to trouble you make yourſelf quite eaſy, for the diſcovery is over, and Mr. Bamſted's lawyer will, you may be aſſured, receive very proper inſtructions from him.

Well, then, madam, replied he, I am thoroughly ſatisfied; and with your permiſſion will pay a viſit of gratitude to Mr. Shipton, to whom I am certainly indebted for the acceleration of my happineſs.

By all means, ſaid Mrs. Morton; I am very ready to encourage your gratitude to a gentleman who has, I firmly believe, been actively inſtrumental in forwarding your felicity.

Morton,

Morton, at the end of this ſpeech, bidding his mother adieu, proceeded to Mr. Shipton's houſe, but having, from the multitude of his ideas turned down a lane which he ſhould have avoided, he found himſelf, to his great ſurprize, within ſight of a gothic edifice which he never beheld before. He then diſcovered the miſtake which he had committed, but, as there was always ſomething in gothic architecture which ſtruck his eye, he could not help making advances to the building in view, in order to take a ſurvey of it. It was not, however, an idle curioſity which urged him to advance: he had miſſed the road to Mr. Shipton's, and he really could not tell what courſe to ſteer without a prompter.

On, therefore, he went, in order to explore the antiquated manſion, and to acquire knowledge concerning the face of the country to which he was quite a ſtranger.

Having been informed by an huſbandman whom he met, that the building which he approached was Moſs-Abbey, the rural habitation of Colonel Froome, he felt an inſtantaneous pleaſure, becauſe he was in hopes of hearing about his amiable friends at Roſe-Place there, as the Bloſſoms and the Froomes were, he knew acquainted, though the former had not paid viſits to, or received them from the latter, while he reſided with them: intending, if he gained no intelligence about Sir Harry or any of the family, to ſend a meſſenger with a letter to Charles to give a full account of himſelf and his proceedings, which he had no inclination to do till he had brought his love-affairs to a criſis: that is, till his deſigns were either crowned with ſucceſs, or totally defeated.

Thus animated, he moved towards the Abbey with alacrity: as ſoon as he had made the great bell return a ſolemn ſound,

ſound, tones of a very different kind ſaluted his ear, for they iſſued from the throat of his friend Charles, whom he perceived galloping at a ſmall diſtance from him. Cheared with his friend's lively hilloa, he ſaw him advance *a toute bride* with the higheſt delight, and anſwered his hilloa with equal vivacity of voice.

My dear Dormer, ſaid Bloſſom, when he arrived within an hundred yards of him, where have you been all this while, where have you concealed yourſelf? And, as ſoon as he diſmounted, I am heartily rejoiced, continued he, to embrace you again—I would have followed you yeſterday immediately, on the peruſal of the note which you left upon your table, into this part of the country, being pretty well aſſured that Crab-Hall was the point you had in view; but my regard for Lady Bloſſom, who had a few unreaſonable fears about my ſafety,

prevented me from profecuting my intentions. I thought myſelf, however, very happy in ſcheming a viſit to this old ſtructure, that I might ride about the environs, and have a chance to penetrate into your retreat: I was ſtill happier, not only in finding my ſcheme generally approved of, but in hearing my father order the poſt-coach to be ready for us very early this morning. But the ſchemes of us poor mortals are frequently demoliſhed by unforeſeen accidents.—Lady Bloſſom, who, though poſſeſſed of many valuable qualities, is, you know, ſubject to mutability, felt ſuch a ſudden averſion to the journey, when the coach came to the door, that neither Sir Harry's rhetoric, nor mine, nor that of Mrs. Haynes, who was invited to be of our party, could conquer it: and ſome hours were ſpent, but in vain, to induce her to reliſh an excurſion which would not only prove

ſo

ſo beneficial to her by the change of air, but be rendered more ſo by the converſation of her agreeable friends at the Abbey. I gave up the journey in my own mind, but a lucky thought of Sir Harry's, who pitied my diſappointment, re-elevated my ſpirits.—After having diſmiſſed the coach, he ſaid, in a whiſper to me, Suppoſe Charles we take a ride over to Sir Jaſper's and ſpend the remainder of the day with him? Your mother will have no objections to your going to ſee your miſtreſs; you may with eaſe make a viſit to the Abbey from Tatton-Farm, and return with me in the evening. Though you will not have much time to ſpend with the colonel, you may perhaps learn ſome news about Dormer. Accordingly I am here, and once more aſſure you that I am moſt ſincerely rejoiced to ſee you.—But tell me before we enter this hoſpitable manſion, have you any hopes?

I am far more happy, replied Morton, than I expected to be—but I have no leiſure now to be particular in my communications.—Every thing is ſettled between Mr. Bamſted and me: and I am in a fair way to be the happieſt of human beings. I have a great deal to diſcloſe to you, but you muſt be contented with what I have mentioned. Since my departure from Roſe-Place, I have met with ſtrange occurrences, by having miſſed the road to the place to which I was going: I ſtrayed to this venerable dwelling, which I had never ſeen before, but when I was informed by an honeſt huſbandman that it was Moſs-Abbey, I attacked the bell in hopes of hearing intelligence concerning the good friends from whom I had removed myſelf. As I have now had the pleaſure of ſeeing you, I have no buſineſs with the colonel; and as ſome affairs

affairs of importance have been neglected by the error which I committed when I wandered out of the right path, you will, I truſt, excuſe me for wiſhing you a good day without being more explicit: — Adieu, dear Charles; and carry my beſt reſpects to Sir Harry— I will very ſoon diſpatch a meſſenger to you at Roſe-Place with a minute detail of the tranſactions in which I have been concerned ſince I left it.

When the moſt cordial adieus were exchanged, the two friends parted from each other with mutual aſſurances that nothing ſhould weaken the friendſhip which had ſo long ſubſiſted unviolated, between them.

CHAP. V.

MORTON, having been inſtructed by his friend how to recover the road to Mr. Shipton's, (for Charles was as well acquainted with all the roads in the country as the ſurveyor of them) proceeded towards that gentleman's houſe, full of reflections on the unexpected rencontre, but without forgetting the inſtructions which he had received.

He found Mr. Shipton at home, and met with a brotherly reception: but when he began to talk of gratitude, obligations, and acknowledgments, he was thus interrupted by him: My dear ſir, ſaid Mr. Shipton, I beg you would not embarraſs me in this manner, by over-rating my little ſervices.

They

They have been great ſervices, ſir, replied Morton, for to them I conſider myſelf ultimately indebted for the ſucceſsful viſit I made this morning to Mr. Bamſted. What you mentioned concerning me at the hall, before my arrival there, I cannot certainly ſay, but I have all the reaſon in the world to believe that it was very much in my favour, and that Mr. Bamſted was very much ſwayed by it.

I am ſincerely glad, anſwered Mr. Shipton, that what I did mention had the intended weight, becauſe I had Miſs Bamſted's felicity at heart, becauſe I knew that you were abſolutely neceſſary to that felicity, and becauſe I really thought that you were every way deſerving of her.

This ſpeech of Mr. Shipton's, affected Morton ſo much, that, in ſpite of the embargo laid upon his lips, he could not help giving vent to the effuſions

of

of his heart. Pardon me, ſir, ſaid he, if I affront your delicacy by declaring my obligations to you: the man who not only relinquiſhes the woman of his wiſhes, when he may marry her againſt her conſent, meerly for the ſake of her happineſs, but endeavours to increaſe that happineſs by warmly eſpouſing the cauſe of his rival, is ſurely entitled to the moſt grateful acknowledgments.

Without waiting for a reply, he then took leave of Mr. Shipton, who was charmed with his gratitude, though he had oppoſed the expreſſion of it, and haſtened to the cottage from which he had been ſo much longer than he deſigned to have been detained.

When the humble habitation appeared, his eyes were, by inſenſible attraction, directed to the window of his mother's apartment, at which, as he advanced, he deſcried her bringing near the diſtant views around her with a reflecting

reflecting teleſcope. At the ſight of that optical inſtrument the Summer-Houſe proſpect at Roſe-Place ruſhed upon his memory, when the beauties of Miſs Bamſted's perſon firſt engaged his attention. Remembrance added new force to the flame which love had kindled in his boſom, and made him wiſh with new ardor for the completion of his deſires. Thoroughly ſatisfied, however, with the favourable ſituation of his affairs, he felt only that kind of tumultuous inquietude which naturally diſturbs our repoſe till the throbbings of hope are deadened by fruition.

When he approached the gate, his mother met him with a mixture of joy and anxiety in her countenance finely expreſſive of maternal ſenſibility. Where, where have you been ſo long, my dear ſon? ſaid ſhe, with a hurrying accent: how could you make ſo tedious a ſtay at Mr. Shipton's, when you might

might rationally have imagined that I ſhould be alarmed at it?

To theſe fond queries, and tender chidings, Morton ſoon gave his mother very ſatisfactory anſwers, and occaſioned a circulation of more chearful ideas than thoſe which had occupied her mind during his abſence.

When they were both ſeated, Mrs. Morton told her ſon that, growing impatient for his return, ſhe had ſent Mrs. Woodly's ſervant to borrow Mr. Bamſted's teleſcope, in order to amuſe herſelf by increaſing the pleaſures of ſight, and to leſſen the irkſomeneſs of expectation. With the teleſcope, added ſhe, I received a moſt kind meſſage both from Mr. and Mrs. Bamſted, to let me know that Almeria had never made a more comfortable meal, and that if ſhe continued to mend ſo faſt, they ſhould in a ſhort time conſent to an interview between her and you.

What

What a delightful meſſage! cried Morton in a tranſport.—Forgive me, madam, if I am too ecſtatic in my motions, too rapturous in my expreſſions—But you have made me ſo joyous by this laſt piece of intelligence, that I ſhall not, I doubt, be able to bear it with a moderated behaviour. What have lovers to do with moderation? Lovers like me are not to be controuled by it. You ſmile, madam, at the intemperance of my carriage, but I hope that the ſtrength of my paſſion will apologize for it. Were I not ſtrongly affected by hearing of Miſs Bamſted's increaſing health, I ſhould not deſerve the honour which ſhe does me, by making me believe that I am neceſſary to her happineſs.

Well, my dear, ſaid Mrs. Morton, laughing out, you have, I confeſs, made a very admiſſible excuſe for the airineſs of your carriage, and have plainly convinced

vinced me by it, that the fumes of love have not yet impaired your underſtanding.

CHAP. VI.

THE next morning, Morton was extremely, I may add, extravagantly, rejoiced to hear, upon his coming down to his mother's apartment to breakfaſt, that they were both deſired to dine at Crab-Hall that day.

The invitation was animating, but it ſpoiled his morning-repaſt. His ſpirits were in ſuch a flutter about Almeria that he could hardly keep his ſeat till the tea things were removed, and the hours he thought, dragged heavily away till his mother deemed it proper to ſet out to the hall, though he had endeavoured

voured to ſhorten his uneaſineſs by writing to Roſe-Place.

Mr. Bamſted, being quite recovered from his ſhock, from which he felt no ill effects, went to meet Mrs. Morton, before ſhe had aſcended the flight of ſteps before his houſe, and conducted her into it with an air which ſhewed how much pleaſure the alliance in agitation gave him. He had, for ſome time, conceived prejudices in her favour, from the propriety of her behaviour, and the proofs which ſhe exhibited of talents ſuperior to the majority of her ſex, and the appearance of her ſon, in ſo genteel a ſtyle of life, tended to render her doubly reſpectable in his eyes. How much are our opinions about people influenced by their circumſtances!

While he conducted Mrs. Morton into the houſe, Mrs. Bamſted did not let her ſon follow unregarded, but turned

turned her head frequently to ſay ſomething calculated to make "his boſom's load ſit light upon his throne."—When they came into the drawing-room, Mrs. Bamſted was ready to receive her gueſts, and the ſalutations which paſſed between her and them were as ſincere as they were polite.

While thoſe ſalutations were going forward, Mr. Bamſted ſtepped out of the room, but in a ſhort time returned with Almeria in his hand: advancing with her to Mr. Morton, he ſaid, Here, ſir, is the lady for whom you have diſcovered ſo true a regard, and of whoſe prepoſſeſſions in your favour I now approve, (though I ſtrongly oppoſed them,) becauſe I do not think that her eſteem can exceed your merit.

Morton, though his ſoul was gladdened at the ſight of Almeria, after the numerous conflicts which he had endured on her account, was not prepared for

for her introduction to him, nor in ſo kind a manner by Mr. Bamſted, was overwhelmed, at once, with joy and with confuſion. He bluſhed, and with a ſtammering voice replied, The happineſs which I feel at this inſtant, ſir, from the appearance of Miſs Bamſted, and from your flattering behaviour upon the occaſion, cannot be deſcribed in adequate expreſſions; I can only ſay that it ſhall be the ſtudy of my future life to deſerve the ſentiments which you at preſent entertain in my behalf. Turning then towards Almeria, with an intendered look, he bowed gracefully to her, and after having told her with a flexure of his voice which forcibly denoted earneſtneſs, that it gave him the higheſt pleaſure to ſee her recovered from her dangerous indiſpoſition, begged her to believe that he would do every thing in his power to prevent the decreaſe of that eſteem with which ſhe, diſtinguiſh-

ing

ing him from the reſt of his ſex, honoured him.

The mixed emotions in Almeria's gentle breaſt, obſtructed the utterance of a reply either to her father or to her lover: the ſwells of filial gratitude and female ſenſibility, were too violent to ſuffer her to expreſs what ſhe felt thro' the channel of ſpeech. She was melted by the kind behaviour of them both, and as her mother ſtood cloſe to her, threw her fond arms over her neck, kiſſed it ſeveral times, and then eaſed her full heart by a flood of tears.

While ſhe was in this affecting attitude, a ſervant came in to announce the arrival of Mr. Shipton, which rouzed her from it, and greatly relieved her by making a reply unneceſſary: the entrance of that gentleman turned the converſation upon general topics, and gave Almeria time to render herſelf in a condition to partake of it.—Mr. Shipton,

Shipton, gueſſing at the firſt glance of his eye when he entered the room, that the lovers had not ſeen each other till then, ſince matters had been adjuſted to their mutual ſatisfaction, and pitying the delicate embaraſſment of Almeria; when he had paid his compliments aggregately, he told Mr. Bamſted a drole ſtory about a little piece of galantry in rural life, which had juſt been communicated to him, and exceedingly diverted the company with it: even Almeria could not help ſmiling through the laſt tears which trembled in her gliſtening eyes.

Politeneſs and good-humour went round the table till the manœuvres of it were finiſhed. Soon after the removal of the glaſſes, which did not make their appearance a great while, as thoſe who were left to the exerciſe of them were not deep drinkers, a meſſage was diſpatched to the ladies to propoſe a re-

meeting

meeting in the Cradle-Walk in the garden, as the afternoon was very ſunny: the propoſal was received with pleaſure, and with as much pleaſure complied with.

In the Cradle-Walk, therefore, they were all, in a few minutes aſſembled, and the beauties of nature blooming around them afforded ſo much delight to them by their colouring and their fragrance that the converſation inſenſibly became local.

Mrs. Bamſted, as they ſauntered along, having aſked Mr. Morton, who had expreſſed himſelf in a rapturous manner at the ſight of ſome very fine double larkſpurs, if he had not a taſte for plants as well as flowers, and received an affirmative anſwer, recommended to his notice a myrtle of Almeria's own raiſing, to which ſhe pointed at a ſmall diſtance. I ſee, perfectly well, madam, replied he, the ſpot on which it

it ſtands, but I hope that Miſs Bamſted will accompany me to it, becauſe there are ſeveral plants in that corner with which I am unacquainted, and, from the ſpecimens which ſhe has given of her botanical knowledge, I ſhall be very glad to improve myſelf in the ſame knowledge under her inſtructions.

Turning to Almeria, when he had finiſhed his ſpeech to Mrs. Bamſted, and not reading a refuſal in her looks, he reſpectfully offered his hand to lead her down a ſlope, which ſhe accepted of with a modeſt air, without the leaſt reluctance, as the looks of thoſe, whoſe apparent diſlike would have ſufficiently checked her inclination, were moſt agreeably encouraging.

When they had paced along ſlowly and in ſilence, till they came within a few yards of the Myrtle, How have I longed, my dear Almeria, ſaid he, for ſuch charming moments as theſe, that I

might pour out my fond ſoul, and tell you what exquiſite felicity I enjoy?—but I want words to expreſs it—If your ſilence proceeds from the ſame cauſe, that felicity is complete.

Then it is complete, replied ſhe, lifting up her eyes ſtrongly expreſſive of tenderneſs, and then throwing them down with a baſhful timidity, for my inability to ſpeak really ariſes from the extremity of my happineſs—Oh Mr. Morton — I cannot go on — ſuppoſe I have ſaid all that you wiſhed me to ſay.

Sweet ſounds! replied he, with a ſpirited pronunciation of thoſe monoſyllables; the ſweeteſt ſounds that I ever heard:—and this, continued he, is the ſweeteſt myrtle I ever ſaw, becauſe your lovely hands contributed to make it appear with ſo much beauty.

Thus having ſaid, he plucked a ſprig and preſented it to her as an emblem of friendſhip

friendſhip, with an elegant compliment adapted to the occaſion; and ſhe, in return, gave a ſprig to him, not without a little appropriated ſpeech. Trifles in the eyes of lovers become things of importance.

Morton, then, overflowing with gratitude as well as love, made proper mention of Mrs. Shipton, by aſſuring Almeria that he attributed the happy alteration in her father's ſentiments to his friendly offices, and that he ſhould always have an high opinion of the goodneſs of his heart.

Almeria, who had alſo been convinced from the communications which ſhe had received from her mother, that Mr. Shipton had behaved with uncommon honour and generoſity, ſpoke very handſomely of him, and ſaid that ſhe ſhould always think of him as he did.

When the lovers returned to the Cradle-Walk, Mr. Shipton, ſeeing them

advance with their ſprigs in their hands, took hold of Mr. Bamſted's arm, and ſaid, Look ſir, what a pretty ſight comes moving this way.—Did you ever ſee a more ſtriking picture of friendſhip adorned with its proper ſymbols?

This lively ſpeech from Mr. Shipton occaſioned a general ſmile, and Mr. Bamſted ſeemed to enjoy the proſpect of his daughter's conjugal felicity with a ſatisfaction truly parental.

When Morton had thanked Mrs. Bamſted in the politeſt terms for having given him an opportunity to acquire ſo much judgment in plants in ſo agreeable a manner, he told her, ſmiling, that he was afraid he ſhould never puzzle Miſs Bamſted in gardening.

The arrival of a ſervant to inform Mrs. Morton that a gentleman waited at her apartment to ſee her upon buſineſs of conſequence, threw her into a wondering

wondering attitude, and the garden-ſcene was ſhifted immediately by the conſent of the company.

CHAP. VII.

MRS. Morton was ready to ſink to the floor with ſurprize and joy when ſhe ſaw her couſin Belton, the amiable ſon of her cruel uncle, approach her when ſhe entered the parlour.

He came ſmiling up to her, and told her that he thought himſelf particularly fortunate in having accidentally ſtopped at that cottage to ſpeak with Farmer Woodly, for that upon enquiring into the ſtate of his family, Mrs. Woodly had given him the wiſhed-for information. I have been rambling about, madam, continued he, during the laſt half year, in ſearch of you, that I might acquaint

you with the happy change in your affairs.

I am quite at a loſs, ſir, ſaid Mrs. Morton, to develop the meaning of your words—but I feel a pleaſure which I cannot expreſs at the ſight of you, after the injurious treatment which I have received from your father, becauſe I am well aſſured that you would not have acted ſo unjuſt a part.

My father, madam, replied he (I am ſorry to reproach his memory) acted, indeed with regard to you, a baſe, a criminal part—The weakneſſes of a parent may be palliated, but the crimes of a parent ought not, ſurely, to be defended by his children. I wiſh I could ſay that my father died repentant for what he had done, becauſe he would then, I truſt, have ordered reſtitution to be made, as ſome atonement for his former iniquities: but he died impenitent—

I was

I was filled, madam, continued Mr. Belton, with the utmoſt aſtoniſhment, when upon examining my father's papers I found my uncle's will.

Will! cried Mrs. Morton haſtily—I was told that my father left no will.

Here it is, madam, continued he, putting it into her hand; he left his whole fortune to you after the death of my aunt, and as you have been ſo long kept out of the poſſeſſion of her joynture, and of the ſeveral ſums mentioned in my uncle's will, I have much to refund, which I ſhall do with the higheſt ſatisfaction. I only wiſh, my dear couſin, that I had diſcovered your retreat ſooner, becauſe I fear that you have been embarraſſed in your circumſtances ſince the death of my amiable mother, of whoſe deceaſe I heard with true concern, as I knew that while ſhe lived you would not be driven to abſolute neceſſity.

Mrs. Morton, after having lifted up her moiſtened eyes to heaven, in a manner which forcibly expreſſed her unfeigned acknowledgments to the great giver of all good things, for ſo unexpected an event, replied, She was indeed an amiable woman, and you inherit her virtues—Oh! ſir, continued ſhe, my heart is ſo full, that I cannot thank you as I ought.

I am entitled, madam, interrupted he, to no thanks, I have only done my duty.

He then made an enquiry into the preſent ſtate of her affairs, and begged her to let him know if ſhe wanted any immediate aſſiſtance.

That requeſt gave her an opportunity to relate the adventures which ſhe met with after the death of her dear aunt, and the happy concluſion of them, by the benevolence of Mrs. Bamſted. After having related her own adventures

tures ſhe detailed thoſe of her ſon, and cloſed her narrative with the higheſt encomiums on the families at Roſe-Place and Crab-Hall, not forgetting the worthy Mr. Shipton in her panegyrics. By what I have told you, my dear couſin, added ſhe, you may believe that I am in a happy ſituation; I ſhould indeed be ungrateful to Providence if I murmured at my lot, but ſtill, while I am uncertain about the fate of Mr. Morton, I cannot taſte pure felicity. Notwithſtanding all the ill-uſage which I have received from him, I cannot drive him either from my memory or my heart: — Had I not heard of his repentance, perhaps, I ſhould have been more eaſy concerning him, but now I muſt be anxious when he employs my thoughts.

Mr. Belton, after having declared in the moſt affectionate terms the ſatisfaction which he felt at the happy con-

cluſion of her adventures, and of her ſon's, and wiſhed that her felicity might be compleated by the arrival of his couſin Morton; took his leave, but not without promiſing to call upon her in a few days, in order to wait on her to London, and to inveſt her with the fortune of which ſhe had been ſo long, and ſo unjuſtly deprived.

CHAP. VIII.

MRS. Morton, when her couſin had taken his leave, opened the packet which he had delivered into her hands; in which ſhe found her father's will and her mother's joynture: by the firſt ſhe came into the poſſeſſion of fifteen thouſand pounds, by the laſt of five hundred a year. Pious emotions

ſwelled

ſwelled her breaſt; grateful ſenſations dimmed her ſight. She wept over them, at once adoring the decrees of Providence, and ſtruck with admiration at the generoſity of her couſin's behaviour, who, had he been actuated by the corrupt principles which governed his father's conduct, might have ſtill detained the joynture by the ſtrength of his opulence, and have ſecreted the will in order to increaſe his wealth.

In this weeping ſituation her ſon, who grew impatient at her abſence from her friends, found her, and when he was informed of the cauſe of her tears, his ſoul was ſo much ſhaken by the intelligence, that the drops of ſympathy ſtarted from his eyes. Gracious heaven! cried he, with an ecſtatic elevation of his claſped hands, how inſcrutable are thy ways, but how adorable is thy wiſdom, and how infinite is thy goodneſs!—After this ſhort addreſs to the deity, he

tenderly embraced his amiable parent, and humbly prayed that ſhe might long live to enjoy the bleſſings which were ſhowered down upon her in ſuch abundance.

Bleſſings, indeed, my dear ſon, come thick upon me, but the enjoyment of them will be interrupted whenever I think about your penitent father.—Oh! that he was with me to participate of my acquiſitions!

Think not, madam, with too much anxiety about my father:—the various and aſtoniſhing changes in human affairs are often ſufficient to depreſs the ſallies of hope, but they are as often ſufficient to diſcourage the gloomy ſuggeſtions of deſpair.

He then, to prevent the indulgence of melancholy reflections, told her that he was deſired by all the company whom he had left at the Hall to bring her again as ſoon as her buſineſs was diſpatched.

patched.—Come, madam, continued he, let us go back to our friends; they will, I am ſure, be very much diſappointed if I return to them without you.—The juſtneſs of his ſentiments made an impreſſion upon her mind, and his filial aſſiduity gladdened her heart: ſhe locked up the papers in her eſcrutore and complied with his requeſt.

CHAP. IX.

WHEN Mrs. Morton and her ſon returned to Crab-Hall, the latter made a very ſubſtantial apology for the abſence of the former, by relating the buſineſs which had detained her from it. The moſt cordial congratulations followed that apology, and Mr. Shipton was not leſs ſincere in his expreſſions of joy upon the occaſion than thoſe who were

were more immediately intereſted in Mrs. Morton's good fortune. After having ſpent the evening in elegant mirth, and with unaffected ſatisfaction, Morton re-conducted his excellent mother to her apartments.

Towards noon the next day, Morton received a letter from his friend Charles, in anſwer to that which he had diſpatched to him, wherein he gave him a full account of his affairs: the ſheet from Roſe-Place contained the following lines.

To JAMES MORTON, *Eſq.*

Dear Morton—

I am truly rejoiced to find that your matters are in ſo agreeable a train: after the agitation, in which you left us, you muſt certainly feel a moſt delicious flutter of ſpirits on the ſucceſsful interview with Mr. Bamſted.— But I muſt

muſt quarrel with you a little notwithſtanding. How could you be ſo extremely cloſe about the adventures which you met with before I was ſo fortunately reſcued by your courage and addreſs? Surely, the concealment of them, of your connections, and of your name was not kind, when you was aſſured of my friendly diſpoſitions?—However, as you had, I ſuppoſe, ſome private reaſons for not making ſuch diſcoveries, I am very ready to forgive your not entruſting me with all the ſecrets of your heart.

As your affairs at the Hall go on ſo ſwimmingly, I hope that you will not deem it at all neceſſary to poſtpone the completion of your happineſs with Miſs Bamſted, when the requiſite preparations for your nuptials are finiſhed. Shipton has behaved like an angel: but the old man may tack about and overturn all your meaſures.

The

The preparations for my matrimonial exhibition will be in a ſhort time concluded: promiſe to accelerate the people concerned on your ſide, and we will ſtart together.

Your friends here are as warmly attached to you as ever, and joyed over that part of your narrative in which the felicity of your preſent ſituation was ſtrongly expreſſed. Sir Harry and Lady Bloſſom deſire to be affectionately remembered; and Mrs. Haynes hopes not to be forgotten. As for myſelf, I ſhall ſay nothing. If this letter will not prove the ſincerity of my friendſhip, I have blunted my pen to no purpoſe in writing it. Adieu.

C. B.

The peruſal of his friend Bloſſom's lively letter gave Morton a great deal of pleaſure, and the communication of its contents gave his mother alſo no ſmall

ſmall ſatisfaction, who reflected with the moſt grateful delight upon the uncommon kindneſſes he had received at Roſe-Place.

While Morton was re-peruſing his friend's epiſtle, with an additional avidity, Mr. Belton arrived very unexpectedly, as he had told his couſin that he had taken leave of her for a few days.

There ſeemed to be an impatience in his looks, as he deſcended from his chaiſe as if he had ſomething of importance to deliver. He appeared with a gravity upon his countenance, but it reſembled that which is ſometimes aſſumed to check a riſing joy.

When Mr. Belton had paid his compliments to Mr. Morton, and was ſeated, he began in the following manner; addreſſing himſelf to Mrs. Morton:—At my departure from you, madam, yeſterday, I did not imagine that I ſhould have made you a viſit ſo ſoon, but when

when I have related the adventure which I met with before I reached my own houſe, you will not be ſurprized at my re-appearance this morning.—Not to keep you in ſuſpence, madam; in paſſing through N—— I was ſeized on a ſudden with ſuch a giddineſs in my head, that I could not proceed—I, therefore, ſtopped at the firſt inn I came to after the ſeizure, till the giddineſs went off—I am frequently troubled with little vertigos, but they never continue a great while.—There is a regiment quartered at N——. Several ſoldiers were accomodated at the houſe at which I alighted.

Juſt when I was ſtepping into my carriage, recovered from the diſorder which had detained me, I heard one of the ſoldiers ſalute his comrade by the name of Morton. Turning to look at the man ſo ſaluted, I was ſtruck with his air and figure, and could not help going

going back to the room which I had quitted, nor refrain from ſending for him, to queſtion him concerning his family. You will eaſily believe me, when I tell you that I was inexpreſſibly ſurprized to find him to be the very perſon whoſe abſence you have ſo long lamented: yes, madam, the common ſoldier who had ſo much attracted my attention, was indeed, my couſin Morton.

Thank heaven, cried Mrs. Morton, in a tranſport, then I ſhall be bleſſed indeed!—But go on, continued ſhe—go on ſir.

When he came into the room, we recognized each other immediately, and embraced each other as friends upon their meeting after a tedious ſeparation. O ſir, ſaid I, what drove you into this wretched way of life?

Numerous diſappointments, replied he, briefly; and accumulated diſtreſſes.

He

He then ſighed, turned his head aſide, and covered his eyes with his hand.

There was a melancholy dignity in his manner which touched me extremely, and compaſſion tied up my tongue. After a ſhort pauſe he thus went on:—My diſtreſſes have been numerous, ſir, but I have deſerved them all, becauſe I forced the moſt amiable of women and of wives, by the cruelty of my behaviour to her, to abandon me. From that time, I have enjoyed no peace of mind, and much do I now fear that I ſhall carry my griefs with me to the grave.

Here he ſighed heavily again, and looked as if his conſcience ſmote him ſeverely for his paſt offences.

Give not encouragement, ſir, replied I, pitying his deſpairing condition, but afraid of ſhocking his ſpirits too much by an abrupt diſcovery, to ſuch gloomy reflections; Mrs. Morton may be ſtill alive,

alive, though your enquiries after her have been unſucceſsful.

Could I but hear of her being ſtill alive, ſaid he, with an eagerneſs of ſpeech, I would fly immediately to throw myſelf at her feet, and implore her pardon for the injuries which ſhe received from me, from me who ought to have been the fondeſt, the tendereſt, the moſt indulgent huſband to her.—O, ſir, continued he, claſping my hand in his, ſhe was a pattern for her ſex: but blinded by a paſſion for another woman, every way her inferior, her beauties grew leſs and leſs attractive in my eyes, and her virtues had leſs and leſs power to charm me. But why do I revive ſcenes which I ſhould rather wiſh to bury in oblivion, ſince the revival of them will only madden my brain?

There was a diſtraction in Mr. Morton's mein at the cloſe of his laſt ſpeech which

which made me not yet willing to declare abruptly that you were alive. I, therefore, only told him that I had reaſon to believe he would be rendered happy by ſome intelligence about you in a ſhort time.

Ah! ſir, replied he, I dare not to flatter myſelf with ſuch hopes. From whom ſhould I receive ſuch ſoul-delighting intelligence?

From me—anſwered I, with a ſteady accent.

From you, ſir? ſaid he, with an amazed aſpect; Pray don't abuſe me—for another diſappointment will totally unhinge me.

To convince you, replied I, that I am in earneſt, I had the pleaſure of ſeeing Mrs. Morton yeſterday in good health and happy in her ſituation; unhappy only from her uncertainty concerning your fate.

Where,

Where, where, ſir, cried he, impetuouſly, is the dear, amiable, injured woman? — This is joyful news indeed. Excuſe my tranſports.—Where is ſhe to be found?

I then informed him particularly in what manner I diſcovered your retreat: by what motives I was urged to make a diligent ſearch after you, and what paſſed at the interview between us.

Attention and aſtoniſhment were blended in his countenance while my narration continued, and when I cloſed it, he cried out with an ecſtatic exertion of his voice, A thouſand thanks to you, my excellent couſin, for this animating news, which has raiſed me from the deepeſt dejection, and which has filled my breaſt with raptures not to be adequately expreſſed by the moſt nervous language.

When he had thus given a looſe to the firſt effuſions of his over-charged heart,

heart, I hinted a deſire to be acquainted with the immediate cauſe of his appearance in a ſtation which could not but be extremely mortifying to a man of his cultivated underſtanding and refined ideas.

You make me bluſh, ſir, to remember that cauſe, but you have a right to be informed of it. Reduced to my laſt ſhilling by a variety of diſtreſſes which ſhall be related to you diſtinctly hereafter, and ſmarting at the repeated diſappointments which I had met with, I ſtopped at an alehouſe for a little refreſhment, having walked till I was ready to faint, where I fell in with a recruiting ſerjeant, who, taking the advantage of my apparent neceſſities, and frequent expreſſions of deſpondence, worked me up gradually to intoxication, and then eaſily deprived me of my liberty. When I awaked from my delirium I ſtarted to think of the ſnare into which I had been

been drawn, but as I had no hopes of ſeeing either my wife or my ſon again, I began to reconcile myſelf to my lot degrading as it was, and determined to deſerve the applauſes of my ſuperiors by the propriety of my behaviour. As the regiment into which I was enliſted is a marching one, I have been in ſeveral places abroad, and have viſited many parts of my own country. But come, my dear couſin, continued he, excuſe my not deſcending to particulars—I am too impatient to ſee Mrs. Morton, to deſcribe minutely the ſcenes through which I have paſſed.

Impatient as you are, replied I, you muſt be detained from the ſight of her till I have prepared her for your appearance, which may, if unexpected, give too violent a ſhock to her ſpirits. Beſides, how can you poſſibly quit the regiment without being guilty of deſertion?

I can, I believe ſir, ſaid he, give a very ſatisfactory anſwer to that not improper queſtion—Our colonel is at preſent in the town: he is an humane, good-natured man, and will, I dare ſay, upon hearing of the great change in my affairs, ſign my diſcharge: my place will be ſoon filled up, for there are always ignorant or profligate young fellows ready to run into the army.

Charmed with the hint, I went immediately to the colonel with him, who behaved with the utmoſt politeneſs, and as I recognized in him a gentleman who had formerly received a few civilities from me at the German Spa, the buſineſs on which I waited upon was, with the leſs difficulty, tranſacted.

When the colonel had been acquainted by Mr. Morton with the diſcovery which had prompted him to wiſh for his diſcharge, and found that we had near connections together, Morton, ſaid he

he to him, from the firſt time of my ſeeing you I have thought that you never was deſigned by nature for a common ſoldier; on your own account therefore, and on Mr. Belton's, whoſe civilities abroad I have not forgot, I releaſe you, with pleaſure, from the duties of one—From this moment I beg you will be my gueſt till you chuſe to take your leave of this town.

Mr. Morton and I were, you may be aſſured, madam, liberal of our acknowledgments to the colonel for the gentility of his carriage upon the occaſion: in conſequence of his requeſt, I left Mr. Morton at his quarters, in order to complete your happineſs by removing your diſquietudes about him.

Here Belton pauſed, and Mrs. Morton, after having returned the ſincereſt thanks to heaven for the long wiſhed-for intelligence which he had communicated, ſaid to him, with lively accents,

You have made me, my dear couſin, the happieſt of women, and I ſhall ever remember this additional proof of the goodneſs of your heart.

Morton too was not ſilent: joy ſparkled in his eyes, and the tranſported ſon appeared in every feature of his face; the filial ſenſations which he ſtrongly felt, he ſtrongly expreſſed. When he had laviſhed praiſes on his couſin for the amiableneſs of his whole behaviour, he turned to his mother and ſaid, As the colonel's quarters are not far off, madam, why ſhould we not go directly to them? I am impatient to ſee my father, and you will, I am certain, be equally glad to behold him again.

Mrs. Morton having highly applauded her ſon's propoſal, Mr. Belton accommodated them both in his chaiſe, and they ſoon loſt ſight of the cottage.

CHAP.

CHAP. X.

WHEN Belton had driven his chaiſe into the town of N—— he deemed it more prudent to carry Mrs. Morton to the inn at which he had ſtopped the day before, and to acquaint Mr. Morton with her arrival there, than to bring them together abruptly in a public manner. He accordingly ſtopped at the Queen's Head, and, after having introduced Mrs. Morton to a private room, went to the colonel's quarters to conduct her huſband to her.

Notwithſtanding the pains which Belton had diſcreetly taken to prepare Mrs. Morton for the tender ſcene, ſhe was unable to ſuſtain the ſhock which it

occaſioned. She fainted away at the ſight of him whoſe long abſence ſhe had ſo affectionately lamented, and he, not ſeeming to know that his ſon was ſo near, flew acroſs the room to her aſſiſtance. With the moſt pathetic exclamations he hung over her enamoured, and with the fondeſt accents endeavoured to wake her from her ſwoon.—O my deareſt, moſt lovely, moſt amiable Fanny, cried he, preſſing her hand between his, unclose thy beauteous eyes: 'tis your Harry, your long-abſent huſband who ſpeaks, and who wiſhes to be heard: look up and make me bleſt: utter but a ſingle word, and I ſhall be doubly ſo.

The latter ſentences having been articulated in a louder key than the foregoing ones, Mrs. Morton diſcovered ſigns which prognoſticated the return of her ſenſes, and in a few moments ſhe regained the poſſeſſion of them.—Gazing

ing at him for awhile with fixed eyes, ſhe ſtarted from her chair, flung her arms round his neck, and ſaid with a rapturous voice, O my dear, dear huſband, I want words to expreſs the exquiſite delight which I feel at this happy meeting. I had much to ſay before I ſaw you, but the exceſs of joy at your firſt appearance, robbed me of my faculties and locked up the powers of ſpeech; nor can I now ſay half what I would on ſo fortunate an occaſion.

This ſpeech, warm from the heart, and full of conjugal affection, threw Mr. Morton in an ecſtaſy: he preſſed her cloſely to his beating boſom, and with broken accents, broken through the intenſeneſs of his feelings, offered up fervent thanks to heaven for moments of ſuch felicity, laviſhed the higheſt encomiums on her behaviour after his own

carriage to her, and implored her forgiveneſs.

When he had given vent to the ſtruggling emotions of his breaſt as a huſband, he turned towards his ſon, and tenderly embraced him: but memory brought forward paſt ſcenes with ſuch rapidity to his mind, that he could only ſtrain him in his arms with a parental ardor, and murmur out, My happineſs is complete.

Mr. Belton then told his amiable couſins that he hoped they would accept of a little repaſt which he had ordered, to which he had alſo invited the colonel, as he had behaved with ſo much politeneſs, adding that his coach which he had ſent for ſhould carry them home in the evening, if Mrs. Morton choſe rather to return to the cottage than to occupy apartments in his houſe.

Mr. Belton had taken an opportunity to quit the room while his couſins were

too

too deeply engaged with each other to obſerve his motions, and deſired the landlord to provide as elegant a dinner as the town could afford: By ſo doing he intended to diverſify their ideas, and he invited the colonel who was a very entertaining man, that the converſation might not grow too domeſtic. His obliging offer, with regard to the repaſt, was unanimouſly aſſented to, but Mrs. Morton, as ſhe was particularly conſulted about the route in the evening, ſaid, that if Mr. Morton had no objection, ſhe choſe to go back to the cottage for ſeveral reaſons.

Mr. Belton had penetration enough to diſcover the principal reaſons to which ſhe alluded, and bowed his conſent to her choice: Mr. Morton did not give his conſent in ſilence. Taking hold of her hand, which he preſſed to his lips with the tranſport of a fond lover on his wedding-day, To what-

ever place you chuſe to lead me, ſaid he, my ſweeteſt Fanny, I will moſt readily follow you; from this moment I put myſelf under your directions; I have ſmarted ſufficiently for having been under my own.

The dinner which Mr. Belton had ordered was conducted in a much better manner than he expected, and the time ſpent at the inn, was ſpent to the ſatisfaction of the whole company.

Mr. Belton, when his coach came to the door, rightly thinking that his couſins would be happier without a fourth perſon, wiſhed them all the joy which they could wiſh for themſelves, and returned with the colonel, who was not ſparing of his cordial wiſhes at their departure.

CHAP.

CHAP. XI.

MRS. Morton, as ſoon as ſhe had been conducted into her parlour by her huſband and her ſon, who, both attending her with the moſt engaging aſſiduity, ſaid to the latter, Don't you long, my dear, to communicate the tranſactions of this day to our good friends at the Hall?

Certainly, madam, replied he, and will if you pleaſe ſet out immediately to acquaint them with the agreeable addition to our family. Her looks made a verbal anſwer unneceſſary, and he departed with winged feet to execute his errand.

Mrs. Morton, though ſhe really deſired to make her happineſs known to her friends without delay, was proba-

bly urged, by the ſudden flow of conjugal tenderneſs, to wiſh for the private indulgence of it; for when her ſon had quitted the room, ſhe poured out her fond ſoul with an extravagance of expreſſion which his preſence would have checked, and Mr. Morton, feeling himſelf not under the inſpection of a witneſs, gave unbounded encouragement to the raptures of an impaſſioned huſband in ſuch a joy-inſpiring ſituation.

The return of their ſon drew off their attention to themſelves, and produced very friendly enquiries after the Bamſted-family.

Was not Mr. Bamſted ſurprized at ſo late a viſit from you, my dear? ſaid Mrs. Morton.

He was madam, and the ladies looked aghaſt as if they expected ſome diſagreeable news from my not having made my appearance there during the day: but I ſoon brightened their features

tures by informing them how the day had been filled up. They were all exceedingly pleaſed with my intelligence, and intreated me to bring their ſincereſt congratulations.

The next morning while the Mortons were as happily ſeated at breakfaſt as three people could poſſibly be, the Bamſteds arrived, to whom Mrs. Morton preſented her huſband with a warmth in her manner, which plainly diſcovered the ſecret triumph of her heart on the re-poſſeſſion of him, and received the compliments upon the gladdening occaſion with a viſible exultance.

Mrs. Morton, after having declared to Mr. and Mrs. Bamſted the great obligations he was under to them for their uncommon kindneſſes to his dear Fanny, advanced towards Miſs Bamſted and ſaid, I think myſelf very happy madam, in having a ſon who has diſcovered ſo much judgment in ſelect-

ing

ing ſo fair a companion to heighten the enjoyment of his future life, and beg you would believe me when I aſſure you, that if he finds not felicity in the marriage-ſtate, I ſhall attribute his diſappointment either to want of feeling or want of ſenſe.

Almeria, with a ſweetly-modeſt motion of her eyes, replied, I ſhall always, ſir, do every thing in my power not to diſappoint the expectations of thoſe who entertain prejudices in my favour.

Mr. Bamſted ſoon became charmed with Mr. Morton's varied and lively converſation, and intreated him to ſpend the remainder of the day, *en famille*, at his houſe: but Mr. Morton apologized for not complying with his requeſt, by urging the propriety, the neceſſity, indeed, of paying his early reſpects to Sir Harry Bloſſom for his generous behaviour to his ſon: promiſing, however, to wait upon him with his family on his return. Well,

Well, ſir, ſaid Mr. Bamſted, you have made ſo ſufficient an apology that I ſhould only expoſe my weakneſs if I offered to diſpute the juſtneſs of it: but you will not, I hope, attempt to hinder me from ſending my coach to you at the hour you intend to ſet out to Roſe-Place.

Mr. Morton, having accepted of his civility with many thanks, which were accompanied with thoſe of Mrs. Morton and of his ſon, Mr. Bamſted went home with his wife and Almeria, in order to haſten his carriage for his friends.

CHAP. XII.

WHILE they were waiting for Mr. Bamſted's carriage, Mr. Morton deſired his ſon to give him the draught which he had received from

Sir

Sir Harry—As I ſhall be ſhortly enabled, ſaid he, by the integrity of our couſin Belton, to make over to you a ſum equivalent to that contained in this paper, I ſhall return it to your generous benefactor with ſuitable acknowledgments for his friendſhip and liberality; conſidering the reſtoration of it not only as a debt of honour, but as a debt of juſtice: the ſingularity of your ſituation was an admiſſible excuſe for your acceptance of it, but you cannot, now, any longer detain it from its right owner, without ſhewing an illaudable diſregard of his intereſt to whom you was not a little indebted for ſo handſome a gift; the intereſt of Charles Bloſſom, the intereſt of your friend.

Morton, ſtruck with the nobleneſs of his father's behaviour, delivered the draught to him immediately, telling him at the ſame time, that nothing could give him more pleaſure than the ſurrender

ſurrender of the note to the generous doner of it, as he had received it with the greateſt reluctance becauſe he knew that he was doing an injury to his friend by leſſening his patrimony. But love, continued he, triumphed over friendſhip: my paſſion for Miſs Bamſted, tho' I made more than one offer to reſtore it, prevented me from ſeeing myſelf in the cenſurable light in which I now appear to myſelf.

Away with all ſelf reproaches, ſaid Mr. Morton, interrupting him—You have no reaſon, my good ſon to be aſhamed of your conduct — You accepted of Sir Harry's donation, with an intention, I dare ſay, to make a reſtitution, if you was ever enabled by fortune.

I did, I did indeed ſir, replied Morton; it was the ſincere wiſh of my heart while I received it from his liberal hand, that fortune would one day give

me

me the ſweet ſatisfaction to ſee it in that hand again.

The arrival of Mr. Bamſted's carriage hindered him from proceeding, for his father at the ſight of it ſaid, Well, well my ſon, let us ſet off directly, for I long to give you the ſatisfaction which you have for ſome time ſo ardently deſired: I long to ſee the amiable people to whom you have been under ſuch great obligations, and I long to make all the acknowledgments to which they are ſo juſtly entitled.

In a few moments after the cloſe of this ſpeech, the Mortons departed from the cottage, all pleaſed, though each in a different manner, with their excurſion.

CHAP.

CHAP. XIII.

WHEN the carriage ſtopped at Roſe-Place, it was in the afternoon, and the tea was going round in the blue parlour which fronted the avenue.

At the appearance of Mr. Bamſted's arms and liveries, Charles ran to the window—Seeing his friend's well-known face he concluded that the whole Bamſted-family were his companions, and precipitately left the room in order to pay proper civilities to them. Sir Harry, though not ſo nimble, was full as polite as his ſon, followed him without delay to welcome his new viſitors to his houſe, and to tell them how much pleaſure their company afforded him.

Charles,

Charles, however, with all his expedition, could not get to the door of the carriage before young Morton had quitted it, who, after having affectionately embraced him, begged leave to introduce two of his good friends whom he had but lately diſcovered.—That lady, ſir, continued he, is my dear mother, the diſcovery of whom at the cottage I mentioned in my letter to you, and that gentleman is my father, with the ſight of whom I was not bleſſed till yeſterday.

Without making any anſwer, Charles flew to the carriage, and paid his compliments of congratulation to Mr. and Mrs. Morton, while his friend prepared Sir Harry, who was now come up to them, for the reception of ſome amiable people whom he had never ſeen before. Sir Harry, having felicitated Mr. and Mrs. Morton on their unexpected meeting after the lapſe of ſo many years, told

told them that they were, he thought, particularly to be envied in having ſo excellent a ſon to heighten their conjugal happineſs.

Sir Harry's cordial ſpeech was not thrown away upon the valuable pair to whom it was addreſſed: they both enjoyed the friendlineſs which breathed through it, and convinced him by their replies that they had no doubts concerning his ſincerity.

While Sir Harry was conducting Mrs. Morton up the ſteps to the houſe, and while Morton was talking to his father behind them, Charles employed himſelf as a prompter to Lady Bloſſom, who had been from the moment of the arrival of Mr. Bamſted's carriage, puzzled to recollect the faces of thoſe by whom young Morton was accompanied.

Well-bred people ſoon become acquainted: Lady Bloſſom and Mrs. Morton therefore, at their firſt interview, were

were as eaſy in their behaviour to each other, and converſed with as much freedom as if their acquaintance had been of a long ſtanding.

Sir Jaſper alſo and Miſs Tatton were taking their tea: the former, though he could not reliſh the genteel manners and elegant converſation of the new viſiters, had ſenſe enough to know that they were beings very much ſuperior to himſelf, and ſat rather awed by their preſence. Before ſtrangers Sir Jaſper was naturally in an awkward ſituation; before ſtrangers of their caſt he was always remarkably embaraſſed. Not ſo his daughter, ſhe was highly delighted with her afternoon.

When Sir Jaſper and Miſs Tatton were gone, Charles made a motion, the meaning of which his friend thoroughly comprehended, and followed him into the garden.—Now, ſaid Charles, when they were in private, pray tell me whether

ther Bamſted is ſteady — has he been troubled with no penitential qualms? — He is as ſteady as I wiſh him to be, replied Morton, and the late diſcoveries will, I imagine, keep him ſo.

When Charles and his friend retired to the garden, Mr. Morton, having expreſſed a great deal of pleaſure at the proſpect which he beheld from a ſide window, Sir Harry ſaid to him, Ay ſir, that is a very pretty proſpect to be ſure, but I will place you within ſight of a much finer one if you will favour me with your company.

He then conducted Mr. Morton into a very large back-parlour, from the windows of which appeared a rich landſcape worthy of the pencil of a Claude Lorraine. It was, indeed, a feaſt to the eye of Mr. Morton, who was always enraptured with the rural exhibitions of nature. Till the landſcape faded in his ſight by the departure of the ſun, whoſe

ſetting

ſetting rays had beautifully embelliſhed it, he truly enjoyed it.

Mr. Morton, having been diverted by the beauty of the proſpect to which Sir Harry had carried him, from the deſign which he had formed while he paſſed from one parlour to the other, thought about the execution of it as ſoon as the ſcenery of nature was veiled by evening's duſky mantle.

I am much obliged to you, Sir Harry, ſaid he, for having treated my eyes with ſo ſuperb an entertainment, but I am under ſtill higher obligations to you; and all the acknowledgments which I can poſſibly make will not be adequate to the favours you have conferred upon me.

Favours conferred on you, ſir?—on a gentleman whom till this afternoon I never ſaw?

Yes Sir Harry, on me.—For every favour which you conferred upon my ſon,

ſon, I conſider myſelf indebted to you. It is not in my power to cancel my obligations, but it is in my power to be grateful.

Enough, enough ſir, interrupted Sir Harry, I muſt put a ſtop to this kind of language for it is offenſive to my ears—Beſides, I really don't know what you mean by mentioning your obligations to me—You have forced me to talk upon the ſubject, and therefore muſt not be angry with me for declaring that I am the obliged perſon—Neither you nor your ſon are under any obligations to me: to him I ſtand indebted for the life of mine—No more then, I beſeech you, in that ſtrain.

This behaviour of yours, Sir Harry, is by no means ſatisfactory, ſaid Mr. Morton.

Well, well, replied Sir Harry, I will give you ſatisfaction at another time, but—

The time preſent for me, interrupted Mr. Morton, and I beg you would therefore not think of quitting the room till I am ſatisfied.

He then pulled out his pocket-book, and having taken the draught out of it, delivered it to him with theſe words: Mr. Morton, Sir Harry, is infinitely obliged to you for all your kindneſſes to Mr. Dormer.

Sir Harry ſtarted at ſo unexpected an addreſs, but recollecting that the draught could not be properly executed till he had made an alteration in it, received it with an intention to give it the propriety which it wanted:—Mr. Morton, ſaid he, you ſhall be ſatisfied in a few minutes.

He then called for a pen and ink, and having inſerted the name of Morton inſtead of Dormer, offered to return it. No, Sir Harry, ſaid Mr. Morton, the note is now in the hands of the right owner,

owner, and I inſiſt upon your keeping it. You injured your own ſon when you gave it to mine who received it with the utmoſt reluctance, but, as his love was ſtronger than his friendſhip, he did not behave with a commendable ſpirit upon the occaſion.

Pray don't wrong your ſon, ſir, in this manner; you have great reaſon to be happy as a parent.

I am extremely happy, Sir Harry, in having ſo amiable a ſon, and it is my ſincere affection for him which has actuated my conduct in this affair— He cannot bear to think of his friend's being deprived of ſo conſiderable a part of his inheritance on his account, and as I am by the goodneſs of Providence, in a ſituation to fulfill his engagements with Mr. Bamſted, I ſhould ill deſerve ſuch a ſon if I did not eaſe his mind of a weight which has op-

preſſed it ever ſince the acceptance of that paper.—(pointing to the draught.)

Mr. Morton, at the cloſe of his ſpeech, not chuſing to hear any anſwer from Sir Harry, who was indeed too much ſtruck with his behaviour to open his lips, went out of the room, only ſaying, Come Sir Harry, we have been long abſent from the ladies.

CHAP. XIV.

WHEN Charles had congratulated his friend on the ſteadineſs of Mr. Bamſted, and acquieſced in his opinion concerning the continuance of it, he drew a letter out of his pocket directed to Mr. James Dormer, at Sir Harry Bloſſom's Bart. &c. — This letter, ſaid Charles, comes, I believe, from your old friend Monſieur la Touche, as Bourdeaux

Bourdeaux is ſtamped upon the face of it.

Morton broke the ſeal with an eager curioſity mixed with melancholy emotions, as the wax was black, and read the following lines:

Mr. JAMES DORMER, *Bourdeaux.*

Sir,

You will, I am certain, be concerned to hear that my very worthy brother who had ſo true a regard for you, was carried off a few weeks ago by an epidemical diſorder, which has proved fatal to this place. With his dying breath he intreated me to look upon you as his ſon, as I had no child, and as I was not leſs prepoſſeſſed in your favour than himſelf, I readily promiſed to comply with his laſt requeſt: and to convince you that I fully intend to ratify the deſires of my dear deceaſed

brother, I have incloſed bills drawn on ſome of my correſpondents in London, which will, I hope, be received as tokens of friendſhip.

As I have diſcharged the duties of a brother and of a friend, by the communication of this intelligence, I ſhall, I truſt, give you ſome ſatisfaction by informing you that your enemies at Breſt came all to untimely ends—The captain who brought you thither and the commandant who connived at your being ſo ill-treated at the fort, having quarrelled at Mrs. Villenueve's one night about a new girl whom ſhe had ſeduced from her relations, fought with ſuch fury that they both died of their wounds, and Mrs. Villeneuve herſelf received ſuch a wound in attempting to prevent the execution of their ſwords, that ſhe did not long ſurvive them.

I am ſir,

With the moſt perfect conſideration,

Your ſincere and affectionate friend,

LA TOUCHE.

Morton's humanity was ſhaken by the former part of Mr. la Touche's letter, and he unfeignedly ſorrowed over it; when he reflected upon the latter part of it, he adored the juſtice of heaven in the puniſhment of thoſe by whom he had been ſo much injured, but without feeling any exulting ſenſations. The bills amounted to five hundred pounds.

Sir Harry found the converſation of Mr. Morton ſo very agreeable, and Lady Bloſſom was ſo charmed with the converſible powers of Mrs. Morton, that they both oppoſed their return to the cottage the next morning.

Mr. Morton, in order to make the expediency of his departure the more evident, told Sir Harry, that he could not, without behaving with great unpoliteneſs, detain Mr. Bamſted's carriage another day.

That objection, my dear ſir, replied Sir Harry, is of no ſort of conſequence. Send the carriage home, if you pleaſe, but I muſt beg leave to inſiſt upon your making ſome ſtay here.

Mr. Morton, finding that he could not, without affronting his good friends, leave them ſo ſoon, wrote a few lines to Mr. Bamſted to let him know how he and his family were circumſtanced. Theſe lines were accompanied by a note from Sir Harry, privately delivered to the ſame ſervant, with a preſſing invitation to Mr. Mrs. and Miſs Bamſted to increaſe the happineſs which he enjoyed in the converſation of their friends, by the addition of their company, as long as they choſe to remain at Roſe-Place.

Sir Harry, when he had ſecretly diſpoſed of his note, with ſtrict injunctions to the ſervant, ſupported by a proper ſupplement to them, not to mention a ſyllable about it before his departure,

pleaſed

pleaſed himſelf with thinking how agreeably his gueſts would be ſurprized at the re-appearance of Mr. Bamſted's coach: and he was not diſappointed, for when Mrs. Haynes, who had dined with them, and had juſt finiſhed her firſt diſh of tea, acquainted them with her diſcovery, they were all filled with wonder. Up ſprung the lover of Almeria from his chair, and flew down the ſteps when he ſaw, as the carriage was coming round the ſweep, his future bride, blooming like an angel. Love winged his feet and animated his whole figure. Charles was cloſe behind, and took Mrs. Bamſted under his protection.

Unexpected interviews betwixt friends are commonly more joyous than thoſe which have been pre-concerted. The Mortons and the Bamſteds not having thought the day before of ſeeing each other there, received the higher pleaſure from their meeting together, and

the reception which the latter found from the Bloſſoms, made Roſe-Place doubly delightful.—Mr. Bamſted, when he had paid his compliments to Sir Harry and his family, went up to Mrs. Haynes and told her that he had many apologies to make for his paſt behaviour to her, but aſſured her that he ſhould endeavour to deſerve her forgiveneſs by the propriety of his future carriage. I am now convinced madam, continued he, that you did not merit the incivilities which you received from me — You appear to me in a new light; I have been long blind to your virtues, but my eyes have been ſufficiently opened by ſome late tranſactions in which you had no inconſiderable ſhare.

Mrs. Haynes, very glad to find that Mr. Bamſted began to have ſo favourable an opinion of her, after the prejudices which he had entertained againſt her, told him that the alteration in his

ſentiments

ſentiments, concerning her, gave her a great deal of pleaſure, and that ſhe ſhould always wiſh to deſerve his eſteem.

To render Roſe-Place ſtill more joyous, Sir Harry diſpatched his ſon the next morning to Sir Jaſper, to acquaint him with the re-inforcement which they had received, with orders not to return without him and Miſs Tatton.

Charles ſet off without delay to execute ſo agreeable a commiſſion, and met with no obſtructions to the orders with which he was charged.

Miſs Tatton and Miſs Bamſted were particularly pleaſed to ſee each other again, and their lovers were not a little delighted to ſee their mutual ſatisfaction, as they propoſed no ſmall happineſs from the continuance of their friendſhip after marriage, for which they began to grow impatient and to murmur at the tardineſs of the lawyers.

After

After what has been ſaid during the courſe of this hiſtory, the readers of it will naturally expect a couple of weddings, for the concluſion of it: not to diſappoint, therefore, their natural expectations, I ſhall finiſh it by informing them that Mr. Morton was married to Miſs Bamſted, and that Mr. Bloſſom was at the ſame time indiſſolubly united to Miſs Tatton. With the happieſt omens they approached the altar—With the entire approbation of their parents, and with the ſincereſt affection for each other.

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